

Exercise for

Lymphoedema of the Leg(s)

Top tips to help you make the most out of any exercise

- Always wear your compression bandages/garment(s).
- If your swollen limb(s) feel tired or uncomfortable, ease off or STOP.
- Begin slowly and gradually build up.
- Consult your therapist before commencing exercises with weights or resistance.
- Begin and end every exercise session with breathing exercises (see Exercise 1).
- Exercise in water can be very beneficial. It is great for fitness, the buoyancy takes the weight off your heavy limb and the pressure of the water aids lymphatic drainage.
- Yoga and Pilates are also beneficial. They are gentle forms of exercise that encourage movement, stretching and deep breathing.
- Avoid hot baths, saunas, steam rooms and jacuzzis/hot tubs as these may cause increased swelling.

For further information contact:

Therapist: _____

Tel no: _____

Exercise for lymphoedema of the leg(s)

Gentle rhythmical exercise that encourages movement and stretching can improve lymph drainage, joint movement and posture.

Exercise can be taken in many different forms e.g. housework, walking the dog or swimming.

The following exercises are to help increase joint movement and reduce limb swelling. They should be performed slowly and rhythmically. Try to incorporate them into your daily routine.

Exercise 1 Breathing Exercises



- Sit or lie with shoulders relaxed and hands resting below ribs.
- Breathe in through your nose and feel your abdomen rising then slowly sigh out through your mouth.
- Repeat 5 times.

Exercise 2 Static Gluts



- Lie on your back with your knees bent.
- Tighten your buttocks, hold for 5 seconds, then relax.
- Repeat 5 times.

Exercise 3 Static Quads



- Lie on your back with your legs straight.
- Pull your toes up towards you and push the back of the knee into the bed.
- Hold for 5 secs and then relax.
- Repeat 5 times.

Exercise 4 Hip and Knee Bends



- Lying on your back, bend your hip and knee up towards your chest.
- Relax your leg down again.
- Repeat with the other leg.
- Repeat 5 times each leg.

Exercise 5 Knee Extensions



- Sit on the edge of your bed.
- Straighten your leg out in front, pulling your toes up towards ceiling as you do.
- Bend your knee so your foot returns to the floor.
- Repeat 5 times each leg.

Exercise 6 Ankle bends / circles



- Bend your ankle up towards you, so your toes point to the ceiling.
- Bend your ankle down, pointing the toes to the floor.
- Repeat 10 times.
- Rotate your ankle clockwise 10 times.
- Rotate your ankle anti-clockwise 10 times.

Exercise 7 Ankle raises



- Stand holding onto a firm surface.
- Raise your heels up off the floor. You should feel your calf muscle squeeze.
- Repeat 5 times.

Exercise 8 Marching on the Spot



- Stand holding onto a firm surface if required.
- March on the spot for one minute.

You may find Exercises 9 and 10 difficult. If in doubt consult your therapist before proceeding.

Exercise 9 Leg raises



- Lie on your back with your feet up **against a wall** and your knees straight.
- Slowly bend the knees, sliding your feet down the wall.
- Straighten your knees, sliding your feet up the wall.
- Repeat 5 times.

Exercise 10 Leg cycles



- Lying on your back with your feet resting on pillows (2-3), raise your legs one at a time off the pillows and cycle them in the air.
- Repeat 5 cycles and then rest.
- Repeat 5 times.

Repeat Exercise 1 Breathing Exercises



Repeat these exercises _____ times daily.