

What is LYMPHEDEMA?

Lymphedema is a chronic condition that impacts a number of cancer patients, especially those who have lymph nodes removed or damaged as part of their treatment. The condition is most commonly associated with breast cancer patients but can result from the treatment for other cancers. While lymphedema can be painful, even debilitating, the condition can be managed, prevented and, in some cases, reversed.

SYMPTOMS

The most common signs of lymphedema include:

Pain, heat and/or redness in the affected area

Persistent depressions in the skin when pressed

A feeling of tightness or stiffness in the skin

Swelling, most often in the arms, hands, fingers, shoulders, chest or legs

Decreased movement or flexibility in the hand, wrist or ankle

Aching in the neck, shoulders, spine or hips

Untreated lymphedema can lead to decreased function and mobility in the **affected area, skin breakdown, infection** and other complications.

Tight-fitting ring, watch, clothes or shoes

A weakness or heavy feeling in the arms or legs