

# BREAST CANCER Rehabilitation

## *The Need For Breast Cancer Rehabilitation*

More than 180,000 American women will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year. Most will be treated surgically. If you are one of these women, a number of resources are available to provide you with emotional support and counseling after your surgery.

While these are an important part of your recovery, they may not address your physical adjustments and needs. The Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (IPMR) has developed the Breast Cancer Rehabilitation program to help you return to your pre-surgery level of daily activity.



### *Who can benefit from the program?*

This program is beneficial if you are experiencing after-effects of a mastectomy or lumpectomy, whether the procedure was recent or some time ago. After-effects may include:

- ▶ Reduced strength, flexibility and endurance
- ▶ Increased sensitivity and pain
- ▶ Chronic lymphedema (swelling) following radiation, chemotherapy and/or removal of lymph nodes
- ▶ Loss of independence in daily living activities



### *What does the program include?*

Following a comprehensive evaluation, a licensed and registered therapist will design a program to meet your own needs. Whether the resulting plan is preventive or follow-up, the focus is always on returning you to the active, independent lifestyle you led prior to surgery.

Depending on your individual needs, your program may include any of these components:

- ▶ An individualized exercise program, including stretching and strengthening
- ▶ Sensory integration desensitization and re-education
- ▶ Manual lymphatic drainage to reduce and control lymphedema
- ▶ Compression bandaging techniques
- ▶ Scar tissue management
- ▶ Pain management and relaxation techniques
- ▶ Use of equipment such as adapted utensils or reaching devices
- ▶ Education and information on related topics, including support groups



### *Will my insurance cover the cost?*

Individual programs are designed after an evaluation, and the cost depends on the amount of therapy provided. Medicare and most insurance companies generally cover this type of therapy, but you should check with your insurance carrier if you have any questions about coverage.



### *Is a referral needed?*

Yes, a doctor's referral is required. Talk with your physician or call IPMR for additional information.



### *For more information:*

To learn more about this program, please call IPMR at (309) 692-8670.