

## Summer Tips For Lymphedema

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### Beat The Heat

#### Stay Cool

- When indoors, stay in well air-conditioned places
- Limit time spent outside between 11 am and 3 pm
- Take cool or lukewarm showers vs. very cold water
- Drink lots of water
- Avoid salty foods
- Wear light, loose, non-constricting clothing to allow for the free flow of the lymphatic system.
- Do not wear items that leave indentations

#### Garment Care

If insurance allows, get measured for garments after the hot weather starts and after it ends. Normal seasonal changes in edema can occur.

Wash your compression garment. Sweat, body oils, lotions such as sunscreen can cause the fabric to deteriorate more quickly.

Follow the manufacturer's instructions very carefully regarding whether lotion can be applied prior to donning the garment.

## **Summer Hazards**

### **Insects**

Avoid putting insect repellent on skin and then wearing a compression garment over it.

Treat insect bites immediately to lessen the histamine effect.

### **Clothing**

Wear to protect from accidental scratches, poison ivy, etc.

Well fitting shoes with lymphedema in legs.

Avoid heavy backpacks.

### **Sunburn**

Wear sunscreen

Avoid excessive sun exposure.

## **Summer Hobbies And Sports**

### **Gardening and Lawn Care**

Wear gloves to protect the hands from injury when gardening.

Avoid using affected arm to start lawn mower.

Take breaks.

### **Swimming**

Wear swimming shoes if swimming in fresh water to avoid cuts and scrapes to feet.

Do put compression garment on after getting out of the water.

## **Sports**

Take caution with extremely vigorous or contact sports.

Pace yourself.

Play for shorter periods of time.

Take breaks at regular intervals.

Wear compression garments or bandage affected limb.

## **Travel Tips**

### **Before Your Trip**

If you obtain a new sleeve, wear it for one week before your trip to build up a tolerance to the sleep and evaluate the fit.

If the flight will be long, consider arranging a "stop-over" for 1-2 days on the way.

Break in new shoes prior to vacation.

Consider asking for a prescription for antibiotics in case of an infection in the arm.

Purchase some 20-30+ sunscreen (you can get sunburned through a garment).

## **Luggage**

### *Suitcases:*

Consider packing two light suitcases rather than one heavy one.

To help avoid carrying heavy bags, use the push carts at airports to help move luggage.

Purchase a suitcase with wheels.

Use the unaffected arm to pull your suitcase.

### *Hand Luggage:*

Avoid carrying your shoulder bag on the affected shoulder.

Carry your medication with you.

Make sure your compression garments are in good condition, carry a spare with you.

## **Car, Train, or Bus Travel**

Car, train, and bus are worse for leg lymphedema.

Use air conditioning to avoid overheating.

When not driving, sit in the back seat to elevate your affected limb.

Take frequent breaks to get up and walk around.

Avoid long periods of driving if you are at risk for arm lymphedema.

Do exercises while in your seat.

**During Travel**

Keep your compression garment/bandages on until you arrive at your hotel or destination.

Stay well hydrated. Drink plenty of water.

**During Vacation**

Avoid sunburn.

Avoid overheating.

Be aware of overdoing sports that you are not used to.

Keep your limb cool and well moisturized.

Wear protective footwear on the beach to protect the skin. If you do walk barefoot on the sand, be sure to wash your feet and check for cuts and scrapes.

