Intermittent pneumatic compression

What is this?

Intermittent pneumatic compression or Lymph Assist is a sequential compression pump device which mimics manual lymphatic drainage (MLD), a form of massage that increases lymph drainage in arms or legs. The swollen limb is zipped inside a garment which has 12 chambers. Each chamber gently fills with air, massaging the limb and stimulating lymph flow.

What does it involve?

We often use the Lymph Assist when carrying out other intensive therapies such as compression bandaging or manual lymphatic drainage. As each chamber fills with air you will feel a gentle pressure building in that area. The machine will start massaging at the top of the limb and gradually works downwards. You will need to complete your simple lymphatic drainage (See SLD leaflet) prior to treatment and continue to clear several times during the treatment session.

The Lymph Assist is used as part of a planned course of treatment. Your therapist will discuss with you an individual treatment plan to meet your needs.

What should I look out for?

The treatment should be stopped if any pain, new tingling or numbness in the limb is felt during or as a result of this therapy.

Is it suitable for everyone?

The Lymph Assist is not suitable if you have:

- a known or suspected deep vein thrombosis (DVT), pulmonary embolism, or thrombophlebitis
- an infection in the area being treated, such as cellulitis
- congestive cardiac failure, pulmonary oedema, or any other condition where increase of fluid to the heart may be detrimental
- severe arteriosclerosis or other ischemic vascular disease affecting the area being treated.

Concerns have been raised that manual lymphatic drainage may cause the spread of an existing cancer, but there is no evidence to support this belief. The Lymph Assist operates in the same way as manual lymphatic drainage.

You should continue with daily Simple Lymphatic Drainage, as directed by your therapist.

Will I have any follow up?

You will be reviewed at the Lymphoedema clinic 8 weeks after your treatment has finished.

Contact us

Lymphoedema Clinic (Mon – Fri 8.00-16.00) Tel 01872 252885 or 252601
Please let reception know if your call is urgent

Continued overleaf

If you would like this leaflet in large print, braille, audio version or in another language, please contact the General Office on 01872 252690

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