

Physical activity and lymphedema

Physical activity is very important in the management of lymphedema. During the maintenance phase, exercise in combination with compression is recommended. No type of physical activity is contraindicated in children with lymphedema. Regular physical activity is beneficial for both the affected limb and for general health.

An increase in limb volume during exercise is normal and transient and should not result in the cessation of physical activity.



WHAT IS RECOMMENDED

- There are no physical activity or sport restrictions. Let the children play.
- Physical activities in combination with compression will stimulate lymph flow and reduce swelling.
- Exercise is important to reduce weight (if they are overweight) or keep weight under control.
- Exercise is important to prevent muscle wasting.
- Wear compression garments during exercise if tolerated. If not tolerated, remove compression garments during exercise but put them back on afterwards or wear a lighter compression garment during exercise.
- Be aware of the daily recommended physical activity level for adults (10,000-15,000 steps a day).



WHAT YOU SHOULD NOT DO

- Take more rest than usual as part of lymphedema treatment.
- Sleep in a chair / recliner chair with legs downwards.
- Perform activities that may harm the skin without proper protection.
- Refrain from physical activity because of lymphedema.
- Restrict physical activities associated with daily life.