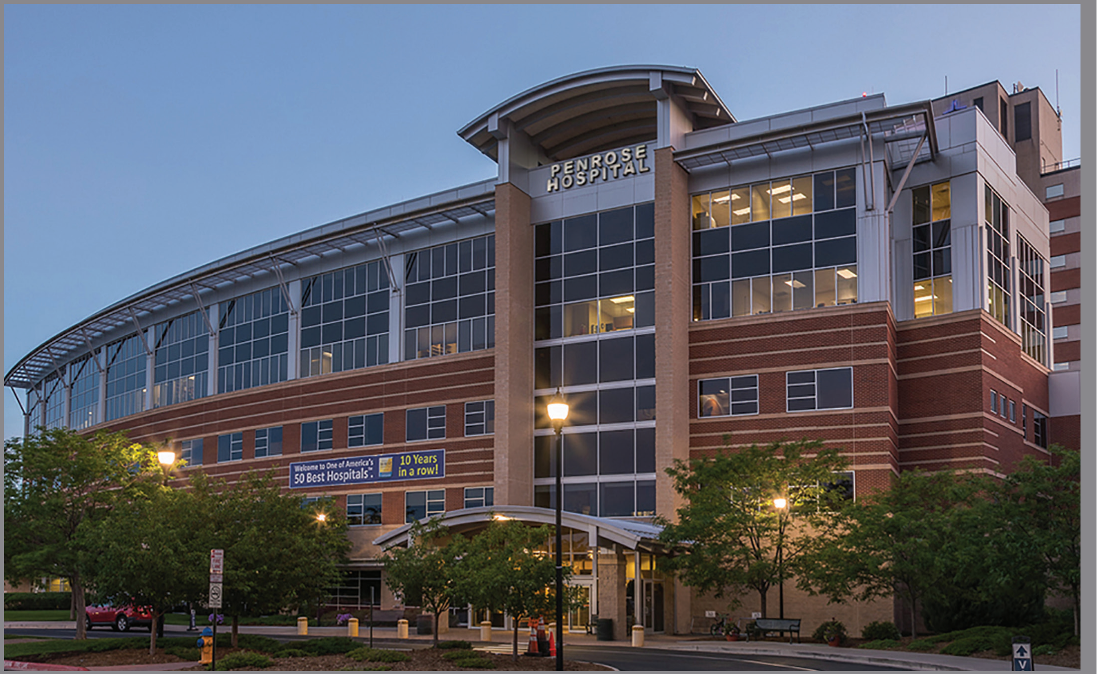
Lymphedema Therapy Treatment Care Packet



Penrose Outpatient
Rehabilitation

Centura Health®

Dear Client,

Welcome to our Penrose St. Francis Lymphedema Program! We are glad you are here, and we look forward to working with you to reduce and manage the edema you are experiencing. This booklet contains valuable details about our program, and educational information about lymphedema. This information can help prepare you for both the intensive phase and home management phase of your treatment.

If you are just beginning your journey with lymphedema, or have been dedicated to your home program for many years, we are glad to partner with you. We are here to support you as you discover more about this disease, and provide the tools you need to manage it successfully. Please feel free to ask your therapist any questions you have as you go through this therapeutic process. We encourage you to keep this booklet to refer back to as your understanding of lymphedema develops.

Thank you again for choosing Penrose St, Francis for your lymphedema care.

Sincerely,

Kristi Ecklund MPT, CBIS
Manager Out-Patient Rehabilitation
Penrose Hospital
719.776.5200 Phone

Dmitriy Rybitskiy, DO
Vascular Surgery
2222 N. Nevada Ave, Ste. 5010
Colorado Springs CO 80907-6865
719.776.6700 Phone
719.776.6780 Fax

What to Expect During Therapy

To do before the first day:

Purchase your bandages needed for therapy as soon as possible to ensure they arrive before your first appointment (see order form from your therapist for instructions). You will need these bandages for the first day of treatment. Please bring all of the ordered supplies with you.

What to wear:

- For arm treatment: loose fitting shirt (preferably short sleeved).
- For leg treatment: loose fitting pants/shorts/skirt, large shoe or cast shoe.

1st treatment will include:

Cutting foam to fit your arm or leg, bandaging your limb with layers of foam and bandages, and manual lymph drainage massage (if time permits). You will be asked to remove clothing during the session so that the massage is directly on the skin. Sheets will be provided to ensure your privacy. You may be introduced to exercise to perform while bandaged.

The goal of therapy:

Is to wear compression bandaging for 22–24 hours. You can remove your bandages to shower approximately 2 hours prior to your next appointment. Please roll your bandages and bring all supplies with you to the next appointment. If you experience prolonged pain, numbness, or tingling in the bandaged limb, follow the bandaging guidelines found in this booklet.

Course of treatment:

- In general, you will be seen 5 days a week for 2 weeks, then 3 times a week for 1–2 weeks. This protocol may differ per therapist recommendation and your specific presentation of swelling.
- At the end of the first week, or the middle of the second week, your therapist will measure for compression garments.
- Garments will arrive in 2–3 weeks from the order date on average. Garments are ordered through a third-party medical supply company.
- Once garments have arrived, your therapist will teach you how to put them on, take them off, and care for them.

We recommend a follow-up evaluation in 6 months or when directed by your therapist. Please call **719.776.5200** to discuss any questions or concerns with your therapist.

It is a privilege to partner with you and provide your lymphedema care.

Insurance Coverage Information

Insurance typically covers the expense of lymphedema therapy. However, Medicare and commercial insurance do not cover the cost of the bandages used during therapy. You will be given instructions on how to purchase these bandages by your therapist at the initial evaluation. The cost is $50–$90 per set per limb. These bandages last up to one year with proper care (see bandage care instruction booklet). The bandages are considered “supplies” and are not usually covered by insurance.

Before the conclusion of therapy, we will measure and fit you with appropriate compression garments to maintain the edema reduction achieved during the active phase of therapy. We work with several national durable medical equipment vendors who supply the garments for your purchase. The equipment vendor will check on your particular insurance coverage and bill your insurance company if it is a covered benefit. These garments are not covered by Medicare. If you have any questions about your insurance coverage, please bring them to the attention of your therapist.

Care of Your Lymphedema Bandages

Lymphedema bandages will have a long life if cared for properly. Please follow the guidelines outlined below.

1. Wash your bandages at least once a week to restore their elastic properties. Wash more often if the bandages become soiled or stained. Wash the material that is against your skin (Stockinette) daily to remove skin oils and perspiration.
2. In lukewarm water, use a mild liquid detergent such as Dreft (for infants) or the liquid detergents that indicate “Free and Clear” on the bottle. Do not use fabric softeners or Woolite. Avoid powdered detergents because the soap powder can cling to the bandages.
3. Do not wash the foam pieces or cotton padding.
4. Toe/finger bandages do not have a long life — perhaps one or two wears. Do not launder these bandages.
5. Wash items by hand, or use a lingerie (mesh) bag or pillow case (with a zippered top) if the using the washing machine.
6. Dry all bandages on a flat surface if possible. If hanging the bandages, fold them in half so they do not stretch. Do not wring or stretch the bandages while they are wet. *Note*: Stockinette can be machine washed and air dried.
7. Please roll the bandages after each use.
8. Please roll the bandages after they have dried following laundering.

Bandage Protocol

1. If bandages cause any pain, rubbing, throbbing, discoloration, numbness, or tingling, try changing the position of the limb. If it does not improve, remove the outer most bandage. If pain continues, remove all bandages from the limb in pain. Note the area(s) of discomfort and report all details to your therapist during your next treatment session.
2. If bandages remain comfortable, wear them until it is time to get ready for therapy the following day unless advised otherwise by your therapist. Remove bandages and shower or bathe the limb with soap. Apply lotion such as Eucerin to the limb. Then kindly roll all bandages and bring them to your next treatment session, along with all foam, cotton, and remaining bandaging materials.

Nutrition Guidelines

Good nutrition is important for overall health, weight management, and the prevention of chronic disease.

It is equally important for people who suffer from lymphedema, the primary symptoms of which include swelling, pain and tenderness — all of which can be reduced through proper nutrition and exercise.

Several recent research studies have demonstrated this relationship between nutrition and exercise and lymphedema symptoms. These include:

Eating Right: Where to Start

A healthy diet and weight for those with lymphedema begin with eating right. This includes consuming well-balanced meals consisting of lean meats, beans, lower-fat dairy, fruit, vegetables, and whole grains. Each of these is important in providing adequate nutrition and balance. It is also important to consume the right amount of calories and incorporating a variety of whole foods, rather than highly processed foods which tend to contain less healthy ingredients and higher calories. Portion control is also critical in achieving and maintaining a healthy weight. The average adult portion size found in most restaurants is 2-3 times the amount that it should be. If hunger is a problem, aim to consume frequent low-calorie, filling snacks, such as a few almonds, or a piece of low-fat cheese, throughout the day and drink a tall glass of water before meals in order to fill up and avoid overeating.

Including Exercise

Physical activity strengthens the immune system and enhances and supports the digestive system activity. In addition, exercise has been shown to improve lymphedema symptoms. It is recommended to begin with thirty minutes of moderate activity each day. Sedentary people or those with limited mobility are encouraged to do so in small, manageable amounts. Even a brief slow walk can provide benefits. It is important to always consult your physician before doing any new exercise routine or vigorous activity.

In summary, nutrition and exercise can help in managing lymphedema symptom by following these simple strategies:

1. Consume healthy, well-balanced meals focused on a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole-grains, beans, nuts, lean protein, and low-fat dairy foods.
2. Achieve and maintain a healthy weight.
3. Be mindful of total calorie intake.
4. Avoid high calorie prepared and convenience foods and "empty calories."
5. Include regular physical activity as best able, with the permission of your physician.

Iannotta, J., MS, RD, CSO, CDN. (2012, December 1). General Nutrition Guidelines for the Patient with Lymphedema. Meals to Heal, 10(12), 34-37.

Reduce Risk for Infection

Skin Care — Avoid Trauma/Injury to Reduce Infection Risk

- Keep extremity clean and dry.
- Apply moisturizer daily to prevent chapping/chafing of skin.
- Attention to nail care; do not cut cuticles.
- Protect exposed skin with sunscreen and insect repellent.
- Use care with razors to avoid nicks and skin irritation.
- If possible, avoid punctures such as injections and blood draws.
- Wear gloves while doing activities that may cause skin injury (e.g. washing dishes, gardening, working with tools, using chemicals such as detergent).
- If scratches/punctures to skin occur, wash with soap and water, apply antibiotics, and observe for signs of infection (i.e. redness).
- If a rash, itching, redness, pain increased skin temperature, increased swelling, fever, flu-like symptoms occur, contact your physician immediately for early treatment of possible infection.

Avoid Limb Constriction

- If possible, avoid having blood pressure taken on the at-risk extremity, especially repetitive pumping.
- Wear non-constrictive jewelry and clothing.
- Avoid carrying a heavy bag or purse over the at risk or lymphedematous extremity.

Compression Garments

- Should be well-fitting.
- Support the at-risk limb with a compression garment for strenuous activity (i.e. weight lifting, prolonged standing, and running) except in patients with open wounds or with poor circulation in the at-risk limb.
- Patients with lymphedema should consider wearing a well-fitting compression garment for travel.

Activity/Lifestyle

- Gradually build up the duration and intensity of any activity or exercise, following the "Start Low and Go Slow" principles. Review the Exercise Position paper: https://www.strengthandcourage.net/lymphedema/
- Take frequent rest periods during activity to allow for limb recovery.
- Monitor the extremity during and after activity for any changes in size, shape, tissue, texture, soreness, heaviness, or firmness.
- Maintain optimal weight. Obesity is known to be a major lymphedema risk factor.

Extremes of Temperature

- Use common sense and proceed cautiously when using heat therapy. Observe if there is swelling in the at-risk limb or increased swelling in the lymphedematous limb and cease use of heat such as a hot tub or sauna.
- Avoid exposure to extreme cold, which can be associated with rebound swelling, or chapping of skin.
- Avoid prolonged (greater than 15 minutes) exposure to heat, particularly hot tubs or saunas.

Additional Practices Specific to Lower Extremity Lymphedema

- Avoid prolonged standing, sitting, or crossing legs to reduce stagnation of fluid in the dependent extremity.
- Wear proper, well-fitting footwear and hosiery.
- Support the at-risk limb with a compression garment for strenuous activity except in patients with open wounds or with poor circulation in the at-risk limb.

Air Travel

Air travel presents several considerations for individuals with lymphedema and for those at risk for lymphedema. It is the position of the National Lymphedema Network that:

- Individuals with a confirmed diagnosis of lymphedema should wear some form of compression therapy while traveling by air.
- Individuals at risk for developing lymphedema should understand the risk factors associated with air travel and should make a decision to wear compression based on their individual risk factors.

During air travel, certain individuals may require the added compression afforded by bandaging. These persons should:

- Be trained by a lymphedema specialist in appropriate bandaging techniques.
- Apply compression bandages before flying.
- Leave the bandages on until you reach your final destination.
- While away from home, continue your regular schedule of garment and bandage wear.
- Avoid carrying a heavy bag or using shoulder straps on the affected arm.
- Use roller bags, or obtain assistance for carrying, lifting, and transporting luggage.
- Wear loose fitting, non-constricting clothing.
- Move about the cabin frequently if possible to enhance contribution of the “muscle pump”.
- Throughout your trip, try to avoid excessive activities of the type that tend to exacerbate your swelling, take frequent breaks for rest and elevation, and get adequate sleep.
- Ensure adequate fluid intake during flight and throughout your trip.
- Maintain healthy eating habits, minimize alcohol, caffeine and salty foods.
- Consider bringing antibiotics with you, especially when traveling outside of the U.S. or if you have a history of cellulitis in the affected limb.
- Wear a LYMPHEDEMA ALERT bracelet and/or necklace.

NlN Medical Advisory Corporation. (2012, July 1). Position Statement on Air Travel from the National Lymphedema Network. Summary of Lymphedema Air Travel Practices, 3-4.

Lymphedema Resource Guide

Non- Profit Organizations

Lypmhatic Education & Research Network (LE&RN) | Lypmhaticnetwork.org | Phone: 516.625.9675

Colorado Chapter of LE&RN Lymphaticnetwork.org/chapters/colorado

National Lymphedema Network (NLN) | Lypmhnet.org | Phone: 646.722.7410

RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

Health Resources in Action helps people live healthier lives and create healthy communities through prevention, health promotion, policy and research.

The Lipedema Project is a collaborative partnership between the Friedman Center for Lymphedema Research & Treatment at Mount Sinai Beth Israel and Lipedema Simplified, LLC. The Lipedema Project is a comprehensive transmedia program to increase awareness and provide education, research and treatment for lipedema.

Lipedema Simplified provides a website that is a portal to information about a relatively common fat disorder that is often mistaken for simple obesity. If you have struggled with fat hips and legs and/or upper arms, and that fat would not go away despite diet and exercise, you may have lipedema.

Non-Discrimination Statement

Each Centura Health facility complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Centura Health facilities do not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

Each Centura Health facility provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:

- Qualified sign language interpreters
- Written information in other formats which may include: large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, or other formats

Provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:

- Qualified interpreters
- Information written in other languages

If you need these services, please request assistance from staff. If staff is unable to assist you, please contact the facility Sections 504/1557 Coordinator.

It is against the law to retaliate against anyone who opposes discrimination, files a grievance, or participates in the investigation of a grievance. If you believe that a Centura Health facility has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, you can file a grievance with:

Patient Relations and Sections 504/1557 | 2222 N. Nevada Avenue | Colorado Springs, CO 80907 Phone 719-776-5370 | TTY: 711 | Fax 719-776-2957

You can file a grievance in person or by mail, fax, or email within 60 days of the date you become aware of the alleged discriminatory act. If you need help filing a grievance, the above mentioned Sections 504/1557 Coordinator is available to help you.

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at *https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf*, or by mail or phone at:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW., Room 509F, HHH Building
Washington, DC 20201
1-800-368-1019
1-800-537-7697 (TDD)
Complaint forms are available at *http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html*

Proficiency of Language Assistance Services

Attention: If you speak a language other than English, assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 1-719-776-5370 (TTY: 711).

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-719-776-5370 (TTY: 711).

CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số 1-719-776-5370 (TTY: 711).

注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1-719-776-5370 (TTY: 711).

주의: 한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다. 1-719-776-5370 (TTY: 711) 번으로 전화해 주십시오.

ВНИМАНИЕ: Если вы говорите на русском языке, то вам доступны бесплатные услуги перевода. Звоните 1-719-776-5370 (TTY: 711).

ማስታወሻ: የሚናገሩት ቋንቋ ኣማርኛ ከሆነ የትርጉም እርዳታ ድርጅቶች፣ በነጻ ሊያግዝዎት ተዘጋጀተዋል፡ ወደ ሚከተለው ቁጥር ይደውሉ 1-719-776-5370 (መስማት ለተሳናቸው: TTY: 711).

ملحوظة: إذا كنت تتحدث اذكر اللغة، فإن خدمات المساعدة اللغوية تتوافر لك بالمجان. اتصل برقم 1-719-776-5370 (رقم
هاتف الصم والبكم: (TTY: 711).

ACHTUNG: Wenn Sie Deutsch sprechen, stehen Ihnen kostenlos sprachliche Hilfsdienstleistungen zurVerfügung. Rufnummer: 1-719-776-5370 (TTY: 711).

ATTENTION : Si vous parlez français, des services d’aide linguistique vous sont proposés gratuitement. Appelez le 1-719-776-5370 (TTY: 711).

ध्यान दिनुहोस्: तपाईंले नेपाली बोल्नुहुन्छ भने तपाईंको निम्ति भाषा सहायता सेवाहरू निःशुल्क रूपमा उपलब्ध छ । फोन गर्नुहोस् 1-719-776-5370 (टिटिवाइ: (TTY: 711) ।

PAUNAWA: Kung nagsasalita ka ng Tagalog, maaari kang gumamit ng mga serbisyo ng tulong sa wika nang walang bayad. Tumawag sa 1-719-776-5370 (TTY: 711).

注意事項：日本語を話される場合、無料の言語支援をご利用いただけます。1-719-776-5370 (TTY: 711) まで、お電話にてご連絡ください。

Ntị: Ọ bụrụ na asụ Ibo, asụsụ aka ọasụ n’efu, defu, aka. Call 1-719-776-5370 (TTY: 711).

AKIYESI: Bi o ba nsọ èdè Yorùbú ọfé ni iranlọwọ lori èdè wa fun yin o. Ẹ pe ẹrọ-ibanisọrọ yi 1-719-776-5370 (TTY: 711).

LA SOCO: Haddii aad ku hadashid Soomaali, waxaad heli kartaa adeegyada kaalmada luqadda, oo lacag la’aan ah. Wac telefoonka 1-719-776-5370 (TTY: 711).

توجه: اگر از صحبت کنندگان زبان فارسی باشید، خدمات کمک زبانی رایگان برای شما قابل دسترسی
است. لطفاً روی شماره 1-719-776-5370 تماس بگیرید (TTY: 711).

Dè ḍɛ nìà kɛ dyéḍé gbo: Ɔ jǔ ké m̀ [Ɓàsɔ ɔ -wùḍù-po-nyɔ] jǔ ní, nìí, à wuḍu kà kò ḍò po-poɔ̀ ɓɛ ìn m̀ gbo kpáa. Đá 1-719-776-5370 (TTY: 711).

Penrose Outpatient Rehabilitation

Centura Health®

Penrose Out-Patient Rehabilitation
2222 N. Nevada Ave
Colorado Springs, CO 80907
719.776.5200 Phone
719.776.5392 Fax
centura.org