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Chapter 1: A Colour Atlas Of Reducing Operations For Lymphoedema Of Lower Limb by Norman L. Brow

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Chapter 2: Edema: Diagnosis and Management - - American Family Physician

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Lymphedema What Is Cancer-related Lymphedema? Lymphedema limf-uh-DEE-muh is a build-up of lymph fluid in the fatty tissues just under your skin. This build-up causes swelling, most often in the arms or legs. Lymphedema can also affect the face, neck, abdomen belly, and genitals â€" depending on the part of the body that was treated. If you are being or have been treated for cancer, talk to someone on your cancer care team about your risk of lymphedema and what you can do to help lower it. Once chronic lymphedema has started, it cannot be cured. But early and careful management can reduce symptoms and help keep it from getting worse. What is the lymph system? Our bodies have a network of lymph nodes and lymph vessels that collect and carry watery, clear lymph fluid, much like veins collect blood from distant parts of the body like the hands and arms and carry it back to the heart. Lymph fluid contains proteins, salts, and water, as well as white blood cells, which help fight infection. In the lymph vessels, one-way valves work with body muscles to help move the fluid through the body and control the flow. Lymph nodes are small collections of tissue along the lymph vessels that work as filters for harmful substances and help fight infection. The lymph system What causes cancer-related lymphedema? Any change in the structure of the lymph system puts a person at risk for lymphedema. Surgery During surgery for cancer the doctor may take out lymph nodes near the tumor to see if the cancer has spread. When lymph nodes are removed, lymph vessels that carry fluid from that area to the rest of the body are taken out, too, because they go through and are wrapped around the nodes. Taking out lymph nodes and vessels makes it harder for the lymph fluid in the arms, legs, or other body parts to flow to the chest where it can get back into the bloodstream. If the remaining lymph vessels cannot remove enough of the fluid in the area, the fluid builds up and causes swelling, or lymphedema. Radiation Radiation treatment can affect the flow of lymph fluid by scarring and damaging the lymph nodes and vessels. This increases the risk for lymphedema. Cancer Sometimes, a tumor itself can block part of the lymph system and cause lymphedema. Infection Infections that restrict lymph flow can cause lymphedema. Can lymphedema be prevented? For example, when lymph nodes need to be removed, some modern surgery techniques might be helpful: If cancer is not found in these nodes, it allows the surgeon to remove fewer lymph nodes. SLNB has shown to help reduce the risk of lymphedema. The surgeon can then try to not alter these lymph nodes. Results are not clear that ARM helps reduce lymphedema. There might be things you can do to lower your risk as well. Talk to your health care team about your risk of lymphedema. When does lymphedema develop? Temporary lymphedema Lymphedema can start right after surgery. It can also start later, about 6 to 8 weeks after surgery or radiation. Even though this type of lymphedema usually goes away on its own over time, you should tell your doctor about it right away. The swollen area may look red and feel hot, which could also be a sign of blood clot, infection, or other problem that needs to be checked. If there are no other problems causing the swelling, temporary lymphedema might be treated by raising the arm or leg and taking medicines to help reduce inflammation. Months or years after cancer treatment: Chronic lymphedema This form of lymphedema develops slowly over time. It may show up many months or even years after cancer treatment. The swelling can range from mild to severe. The lymph fluid that collects in the skin and underlying tissues can be very uncomfortable. It can keep nutrients from reaching the cells, interfere with wound healing, and lead to infections. Lymphedema can be a long-term problem, but there are ways to manage it. The key is to get help right away. Common signs and symptoms you should watch for include: But over time, the swollen area may become hot and red and the skin hard and stiff. If untreated, movement and use of the affected part may become limited. When to get help Call your doctor, nurse, physical therapist, or lymphedema therapist if you notice any of the signs of lymphedema listed above or any of these changes: If any part of the affected area, such as an arm or a leg, feels hot, looks red, or swells suddenly. These could be a sign of infection or a blood clot, and you might need treatment right away. If you have a temperature of Compare both sides of your body

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and look for changes in size, shape, or skin color. This way you can spot changes and get treatment right away. Let your doctor or nurse know if you notice any of the signs listed above. Some doctors measure the affected body part like a leg or arm before surgery, then re-measure afterward so that swelling can be detected and treated before it becomes obvious. You can ask your doctor to take these measurements or refer you to a physical therapist to have this done. If possible, ask to be referred to a certified lymphedema therapist CLT. To find a certified lymphedema therapist contact:

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Chapter 5: What Is Cancer-related Lymphedema?

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Such skin changes occur most frequently in the lower limb, owing to the compounding effects of gravity. It should be borne in mind that edema may be absent in cases where fibrosis predominates. When advanced, the term mossy foot is used, and secondary bacterial and fungal infection becomes common.

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Lymphoedema Care is an invaluable resource for students, nurses and other health professionals wishing to understand more about lymphoedema. $\hat{a} \in \varphi$ Promotes care of the 'at risk' limb in order to minimise problematic swelling $\hat{a} \in \varphi$ Enables nurses to identify complications and recognise the need for referral $\hat{a} \in \varphi$ Includes case studies.