

## **Therapeutic Education in Lymphedema**

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Complex decongestive therapy (CDT) is the recommended treatment which consists of intensive and long-term management phases. The education of the patient about skin care, exercises, weight control and self-management techniques are the mainstay of the management in both phases. As the lymphedematous extremity has significantly increased risk for infection, skin care is vital for both prevention and treatment of lymphoedema. Patients with lymphedema should also be advised to avoid weight-gain. The education and initiation of a tailored and graduated strength training exercises improve signs and symptoms of lymphedema in both therapeutic and maintenance phases. Because the most important factor to maintain the effect of phase 1 therapy is the use of compression garments; education on compression garments is important for compliance and adherence. Education on self-MLD and self-bandaging are recommended in both active and the maintenance phases.

In conclusion therapeutic education on skin care, weight control, pressure garments, self-MLD, self-bandaging and exercises are very important in both phases of CDT and should be considered in order to control and self-manage the chronic pathology, increase compliance and maintain long-term motivation in patients with lymphedema.