**Further information needed?**
Contact your District Nurse or Practice Nurse who can provide you with advice relating to preventing and managing chronic oedema.

The Lymphoedema Support Network is a dedicated charity, providing support and information about chronic oedema.

[www.lymphoedema.org/lsn](http://www.lymphoedema.org/lsn)  
Tel: 020 7351 4480

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### What can I do to help?

- If you have any signs of poor circulation, seek medical advice
- Report any new or sudden increase in swelling to your healthcare professional
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Regularly wash and moisturise your skin with mild, fragrance free products
- Inspect your skin for any signs of infection (redness, increased swelling, temperature, feeling unwell). Seek medical advice immediately if infection occurs
- Keep moving around as you are able/ comfortable
- Follow advice given by your healthcare professional regarding preventing and managing chronic oedema.

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Information correct at date of production*****. Review of information due ***
**What is Chronic oedema?**

Chronic oedema is a swelling that has lasted longer than 3 months. This swelling occurs when the lymphatic system does not drain fluid away from that part of the body.

It most commonly affects the legs, but it can occur anywhere in the body.

**How is chronic oedema treated?**

Chronic oedema is treated in the following ways:

**Skincare** - To prevent infection and to keep the skin supple.

**Exercise or movement** - Gentle exercise and movement helps to move the fluid away from the swollen area.

**Compression** - You may be given a compression garment or bandages to help reduce and support the swelling. This must be supplied by a healthcare professional. Other treatments may also be prescribed if required. It is important that any treatment is carried out daily as recommended.

**Who gets chronic oedema?**

Anybody at any age can suffer from chronic oedema, some people are born with the condition (Primary Lymphoedema).

There is an increased risk of developing chronic oedema if:

- You have poor circulation (varicose veins, leg ulcers, spider veins)
- You have had surgery involving the lymph nodes
- You have difficulty moving around
- You are overweight.

**Can you reduce the risk of chronic oedema?**

In some cases chronic oedema is preventable. You can reduce the risk of chronic oedema by:

- Staying active
- Maintaining a healthy weight by eating healthily
- Looking after your skin
- Preventing injections or blood pressures to any at risk area (e.g. your arm if you have had breast cancer surgery).

**Is chronic oedema treatable?**

Chronic oedema is not curable but it can be well managed with the right treatment and self care.

Chronic oedema is not life threatening, but it is important to treat it in order to prevent other problems, such as infections (cellulitis).