The Lymphedema Management Program is located on the 2nd floor of the Robertson Pavilion.
Lymphedema is a chronic condition characterized by swelling of the patient’s extremities. Patients who have this condition often encounter difficulty with movement, infection and limb disfigurement. The Lymphedema Management Program at Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center offers noninvasive therapies to help patients gain control of chronic swelling, or edema.

Lymphedema is caused by an abnormal accumulation of lymph, a natural body fluid produced by filtration of blood in the capillaries and transported by the lymphatic vessels. Best known as the body’s immune network, the lymphatic system filters fluid through the lymph nodes and removes bacteria, toxins and dead cells. If the nodes have been injured or removed, the lymphatic system’s ability to filter lymph may be compromised, causing the fluid to accumulate in tissues. In some people, this is a congenital condition. Although lymphedema cannot be cured, it can be controlled with proper care.

Our Lymphedema Team
Our skilled professionals seek to help patients achieve maximum reduction of limb swelling, attain optimal functioning and maintain limb health while reducing or preventing scarring and inflammation of the skin.

Physicians affiliated with our clinics provide diagnostic evaluation of lymphedema. Our nationally certified therapists are trained to deliver specialized massage techniques to the body in order to stimulate lymph flow and promote the development of healthy tissue and normal body functions. A medical director oversees the program.

Treatment Components

Manual Lymphatic Drainage
This light touch massage is used to help open lymph channels and allow lymphatic fluid to flow from the swollen area. Effective in promoting wound healing in areas of edema, or swelling, this also helps break up fibrotic tissue resulting from chronic edema.

Compression Bandaging
Special bandages are applied in a specific manner to provide gradient pressure and help reduce edema. This is a key component of the program.

Therapeutic Exercise Instruction
Movement of the affected extremity is vital to the reduction of edema. There are simple exercises that allow muscle contractions to assist in pumping excess fluid out of the body via veins and lymphatic vessels. Our therapists work with patients to exercise their limbs while using compression bandages. Exercise enhances the compression function of the bandages.

Diet
To promote optimal edema control, it is important for patients to maintain a healthy weight that is in proportion to their body height and frame. We also recommend that patients limit their intake of salt and monosodium glutamate. Our therapists provide further nutrition information over the course of the therapy.

Skin Care
Assessment and maintenance of skin integrity is of primary concern in lymphedema treatment. Each treatment is preceded by professional evaluation of the affected skin.

Patient Education
Consistent and correct self-care is important for proper management of extreme swelling conditions. During the treatment sessions, trained professionals teach patients how to help manage their lymphedema through self-manual lymphatic drainage, compression bandaging, simple exercises and skin care techniques.

Patient Referrals
To refer patients to the Lymphedema Management Program, please call 713.704.6500 to schedule an evaluation. You may also call 713.704.5900 for further information.

We are a sponsoring member of the National Lymphedema Network. For more information, please browse the Web site at www.lymphnet.org.