

# Compression Pump Treatment for Leg Lymphedema

Lymphedema is swelling that occurs when the lymph nodes are not able to drain enough fluid out of tissue. The swollen tissue is easily injured. Some people develop lymphedema after injury or surgery, after radiation therapy or there may be no known cause.

A compression pump, called the Lympha Press, is used with a leg sleeve for people with extreme leg swelling. The leg sleeve is placed around the foot and leg and attaches to a pump with tubing. The pump squeezes and releases parts of the leg sleeve in cycles to help push the fluid up and out of the leg. The fluid gets taken up in your body's circulation and leaves your body as urine.

When treated in the hospital, many patients have a tube placed in the bladder, called a foley catheter, to allow urine to drain from the body. This is done because there may be large amounts of urine. Also, the use of the sleeve and pump will limit your movement. The amount of urine is measured and recorded to check how well the treatment is working.

Before the pump is used, the leg is measured to be able to check if the pump is working effectively.

After using the pump to reduce the swelling, your doctor may order special compression hose for you to wear to control the swelling.

If you are to use the pump at home to continue your treatment, the nurse or therapist will teach you how to use the pump.

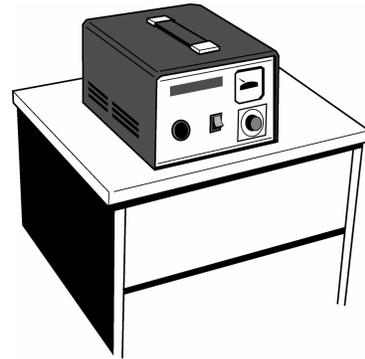
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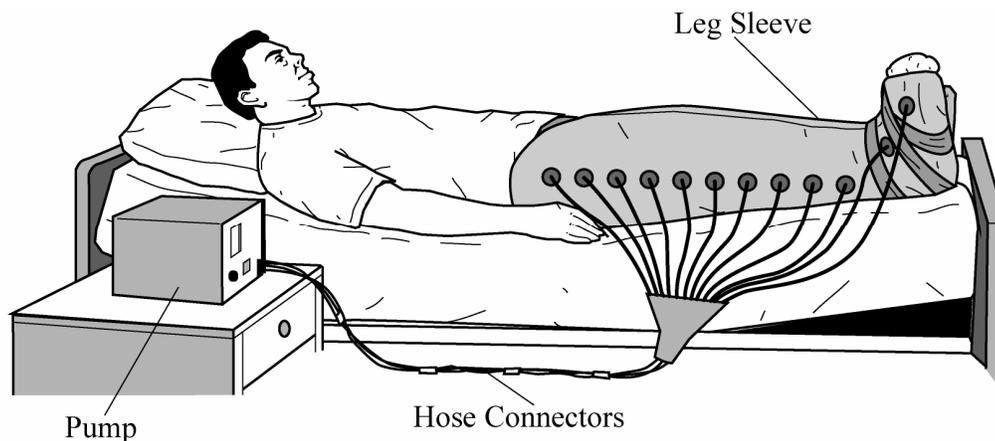
Treatment is often done for 2 hours, 3 or 4 times each day. You may use sleeves on both legs for 2 hours or you may use the sleeve on one leg for two hours, then switch the sleeve to the other leg for 2 hours. Your doctor will decide what pressure setting to use on the pump.

### Steps to Follow:

1. Place the pump on a firm, flat surface close to where you will sit or lie down.



2. Put the stockinette over your leg to protect your skin and absorb moisture while using the pump.
3. Then put the sleeve or boot on the leg over the stockinette. Place your foot in first. Wrap the sleeve around your leg from the toes toward the upper leg so it fits snugly.
4. Connect the numbered hoses into the leg sleeve. Be sure that hose #1 is at the foot and go in order up the sleeve so hose #12 is at the top of the leg.
5. Slightly raise your legs using pillows so your toes are higher than your knees to help the fluid move out of the tissues.
6. Connect the hoses to the sleeve and tighten the hose tubing connector from the leg sleeve to the pump.



7. Turn on the power switch for the pump.
8. Check the pressure gauge to be sure it is in the range that your doctor ordered. For the leg, the pressure gauge should not go higher than 60 mm Hg.
9. When the treatment time is done, turn off the pump. Remove the hose connector from the pump and let the sleeve deflate. Take the sleeve off the leg.

Repeat from Step 2 to treat the other leg if you only have one sleeve.

If you were able to use two sleeves to treat both legs, rest for an hour and then reapply the sleeves to do another treatment.

## **Your Treatment**

You are to do the treatment for \_\_\_\_\_ hours \_\_\_\_\_ times each day.

Be sure the pressure gauge is set between \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Call your doctor if you have:**

- A fever over 100 degrees F or chills
- Large amounts of drainage from any wounds
- Problems breathing or feel short of breath when using the Lymph Press
- Numbness or tingling in your feet or toes
- Chest tightness or chest pain

- **Talk to your doctor or others on your health care team if you have questions. You may request more written information from the Library for Health Information at (614) 293-3707 or email: [health-info@osu.edu](mailto:health-info@osu.edu).**