LYMPHEDEMA

1. Lymphedema is chronic swelling caused by a build-up of fluid that occurs when the lymphatic system is either faulty or damaged.

2. An estimated 3-5 million Americans suffer from lymphedema. That is more than ALS, Cystic Fibrosis, Multiple Sclerosis, Muscular Dystrophy, and Parkinson’s Disease combined.

3. Many patients go undiagnosed or are misdiagnosed due to lack of awareness. If you experience swelling for 3 or more months, see a healthcare provider who can evaluate for lymphedema.

4. There is no known cure for lymphedema, but it can be effectively treated. Compression therapy is the most critical component of treatment. Without it, patients are at increased risk for complications and disability.

5. Leading Causes Include:
   A. Lymph node removal for cancer treatment
   B. Injury to lymphatic vessels due to trauma or infection
   C. Venous insufficiency, causing overload of lymphatic vessels
   D. Congenital malformation of the lymphatics

6. The Lymphedema Treatment Act was a federal bill passed by Congress in December of 2022. The new law will require Medicare to cover lymphedema compression garments and supplies starting in January of 2024, and will set a precedent for other public and private insurance plans. Continued advocacy is needed to ensure that all patients have access to treatment for this chronic disease.

Visit our website to learn more about lymphedema and insurance coverage.

LymphedemaTreatmentAct.org