



## Lymphedema Therapy

The outpatient Lymphedema Therapy program at St. Mary Medical Center helps people who are experiencing abnormal swelling of a body part (including but not limited to neck, arm, leg, breast, abdomen) caused by an excessive buildup of lymph fluid. Our Klose-trained, certified lymphedema specialists use a non-invasive program known as Complete Decongestive Therapy (CDT) to treat lymphedema.

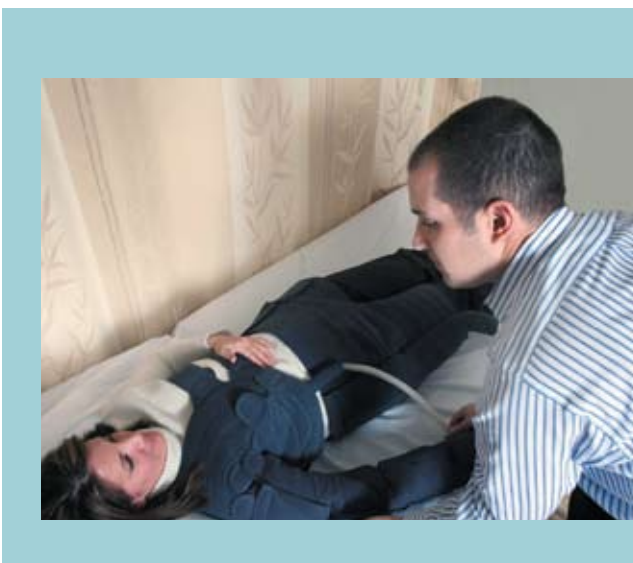
Lymphedema is a chronic health condition that occurs most commonly after surgery, radiation therapy, or chemotherapy for the treatment of cancer. Other causes of lymphedema include infection, obesity, venous insufficiency, trauma, as well as recovery from joint replacement and other surgeries.

Symptoms of lymphedema include swelling of the limbs, heaviness and limitation of movement, repeated infections, skin thickening or hardening, and discomfort. If you have any of the above risk factors for lymphedema and notice unusual swelling of any kind, seek medical care right away.

## Components of Complete Decongestive Therapy

CDT is a comprehensive treatment for lymphedema that includes the following:

- **Manual Lymphatic Drainage (MLD)** — MLD is a gentle, hands-on massage of both the affected body part and adjacent selected areas. MLD can move lymph fluid from the swollen region into parts of the lymphatic system that are still functioning. From there, the fluid is transported throughout the circulatory system.
- **Compression Bandaging** — After MLD, the treated area is wrapped with layers of compression bandages. Bandages help prevent the reaccumulation of lymphatic fluid.
- **Therapeutic Exercise** — Medically supervised exercise programs are designed to strengthen muscles and improve circulation and function of the lymph system.
- **Skin and Nail Care** — People with lymphedema are at high risk for infection, especially cellulitis. Signs of cellulitis include redness, swelling, pain, and fever. See your doctor right away if you have any of these symptoms.
- **Compression Garment Fitting** — Once the affected body part is decongested, you will be fitted for a medical compression garment, such as an arm sleeve or thigh high. These garments, worn daily, help maintain the results achieved through lymphedema treatment.
- **Personalized Education in Self-Care** — Our lymphedema specialists will teach you how to maintain your treatment progress through at-home techniques, including self-bandaging, self-massage, exercise, and skin and nail care.



## Specialized Therapy

Depending on your symptoms, your treatment plan may include combination therapy with the advanced Flexitouch® lymphedema system. The pneumatic compression pump is specially designed to apply light pressure to the trunk of the body and the affected leg or arm. Light pressure stimulates the affected areas and relieves the buildup of lymph fluid. Flexitouch therapy is given under the supervision of a certified lymphedema specialist at St. Mary.

## Comprehensive Care

St. Mary Medical Center promotes a philosophy of wellness that treats the whole person, not just the disease. Our extensive, advanced services include:

### St. Mary Regional Cancer Center — 215.710.5300

The St. Mary Regional Cancer Center offers the most advanced technology along with expert knowledge and leading-edge medicine to treat the most complex cases. A dedicated and highly skilled team of physicians, nurses, and support staff focuses on providing comprehensive care that supports you and your family on every level — physical, emotional, spiritual, and psychological.

### St. Mary Breast Center — 215.710.5393

The St. Mary Breast Center provides a comfortable, convenient, and confidential place for patients to receive screening and treatment for breast cancer. The center offers a “fast track” for abnormal mammogram follow-up studies, some of the latest advances in diagnostic and treatment technologies, a multidisciplinary team approach to patient care, same- or next-day study results, and free access to educational and supportive-care resources.

### St. Mary Wellness Center — 215.710.6861

The St. Mary Wellness Center offers a full range of outpatient preventive health and rehabilitation services, including physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, dietary counseling, and physical fitness programs. Individual, family, and corporate memberships are available.

### St. Mary Holistic Center — 215.710.6948

The St. Mary Holistic Center helps individuals in times of illness, injury, or lifestyle demands. Services include massage therapy, mind–body skills, and lifestyle enrichment classes, all designed to enhance relaxation, decrease pain and emotional stress, and rejuvenate the inner self.

## Insurance and Referrals

Once you are diagnosed with lymphedema, we will need a written prescription from your doctor, and, depending on your insurance, preauthorization to evaluate and treat your symptoms. Our staff will work with you, your family, and your physician to develop a comprehensive and customized plan of care.

Every patient’s symptoms and response to treatment are different, so the specific course of treatment varies by individual. Generally, you should expect to be treated three to five times a week for two to eight weeks.

Registration is required for your initial evaluation. Please call 215.710.2223 to schedule your appointment.



St. Mary Medical Center is an affiliate member of the National Lymphedema Network.

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