

TREATMENT SUCCESS

An article published in May, 2015 by Jama Dermatology shows great success in utilizing lymphedema pumps for both those with underlying cancer disease and those without, all of which suffered from lymphedema. The study sample included 718 patients (374 in the cancer cohort and 344 in the noncancer cohort). This study looked at the effects of utilizing the pump for 1 year.

The lymphedema pump reduced costs associated with treatments by nearly 40% and decreased overall episodes of cellulitis. The study was not designed to forecast cost reductions beyond the 12-month period after the purchase of the device, but cost reductions were achieved primarily through reductions in outpatient and office visits that are likely to persist throughout the duration of the disease.
<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamade>



What is Lymphedema?

Lymphedema Signs and symptoms include the following (<https://emedicine.medscape.com/article/1087313-overview>):

- Chronic swelling of an extremity preceded lymphedema
- Primarily lower extremity involvement (80%) but can also involve the upper extremities, face, genitalia, and trunk
- Fevers, chills, and generalized weakness
- Fatigue related to the size and weight of the extremity
- Embarrassment in public
- Severe impairment of daily activities
- Recurrent bacterial or fungal infections
- Recurrent episodes of cellulitis, lymphangitis, fissuring, ulcerations, and/or verrucous changes

How is Lymphedema Diagnosed?

Go see your physician! Its very important for good management that you have a physician on your team. Imaging and labs may not be needed to diagnose lymphedema; however, the physician may choose to perform some tests to help rule out other conditions, and to more accurately prescribe treatment.

Insurance Coverage of Lymphedema Pump

Insurance coverage can vary. Specific coverage is pending insurance authorization. A pneumatic compression device will not be covered as initial therapy for lymphedema in the home setting. Must first undergo a four-week trial of conservative therapy, which includes the use of compression garment, exercise and elevation. Documentation by physician oversight of this required.

Insurance requires very specific intermittent measurements. It is very important to keep all doctor and therapy appointments so there is medical documentation to substantiate the medical necessity of the pump.

Alpha can provide the compression garment that is needed between pump sessions to prevent the reaccumulating of fluid
