

Exercise for

Lymphoedema of the Arms(s)

Top tips to help you make the most out of any exercise

- **Always wear your compression bandages/garment(s).**
- If your swollen limb(s) feel tired or uncomfortable, ease off or STOP.
- Begin slowly and gradually build up.
- Consult your therapist before commencing exercises with weights or resistance.
- Begin and end every exercise session with breathing exercises (see Exercise 1).
- When performing everyday tasks, if your dominant arm is affected try to use your other arm or change hands frequently.
- Exercise in water can be very beneficial. It is great for fitness, the buoyancy takes the weight off your heavy limb and the pressure of the water aids lymphatic drainage.
- Yoga and Pilates are also beneficial. They are gentle forms of exercise that encourage movement, stretching and deep breathing.
- Avoid hot baths, saunas, steam rooms and jacuzzis/hot tubs as these may cause increased swelling.

For further information contact:

Therapist: _____

Tel no: _____

Exercise for lymphoedema of the arm(s)

Gentle rhythmical exercise that encourages movement and stretching can improve lymph drainage, joint movement and posture.

Exercise can be taken in many different forms e.g. housework, walking the dog or swimming.

The following exercises are to help increase joint movement and reduce limb swelling. They should be performed slowly and rhythmically. Try to incorporate them into your daily routine.

Exercise 1 Breathing Exercises



- Sit or lie with shoulders relaxed and hands resting below ribs.
- Breathe in through your nose and feel your abdomen rising then slowly sigh out through your mouth.
- Repeat 5 times.

Exercise 2 Shoulder Shrugs



- Shrug your shoulders up to your ears and then push them down again.
- Repeat 5 times.

Exercise 3 Shoulder Circles



- Circle your shoulders backwards 5 times.
- Circle your shoulders forwards 5 times.

Exercise 4 Shoulder abduction



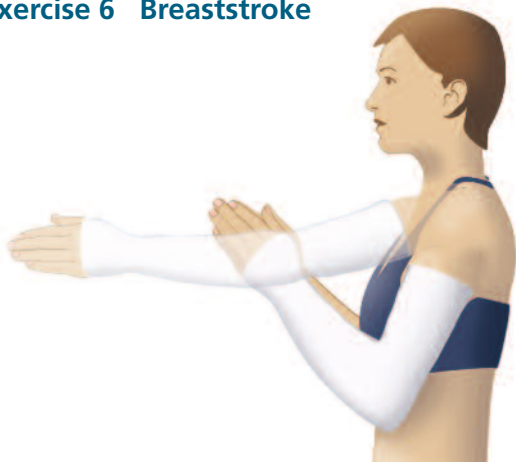
- Sitting or standing lift your swollen arm up to the side, as far as you can.
- Sitting or standing lift your swollen arm up to the side, as far as you can
- Repeat 10 times.

Exercise 5 Shoulder Flexion



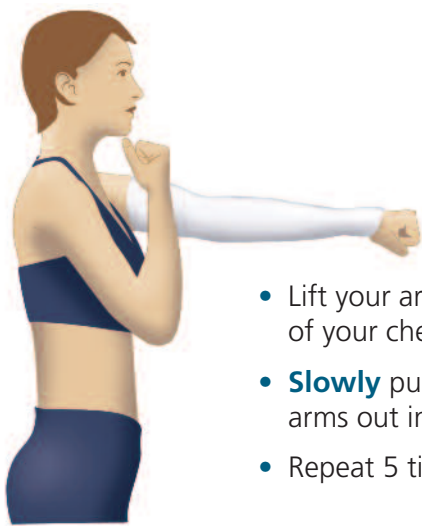
- Sitting or standing, clasp your hands together.
- Lift your arms straight up in front of you, as far as is comfortable.
- Repeat 5 times.

Exercise 6 Breaststroke



- Place your hands in the prayer position.
- Push the hands forward extending the arms.
- Separate the hands, drawing the elbows back.
- Return the hands to the prayer position.
- Repeat 5 times.

Exercise 7 Boxing



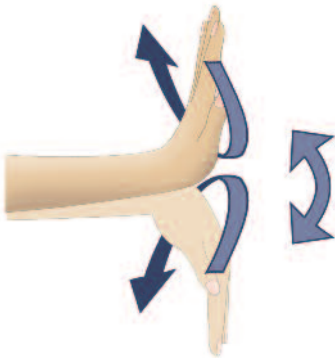
- Lift your arms up in front of your chest.
- **Slowly** punch alternate arms out in front of you.
- Repeat 5 times.

Exercise 8 Elbow Bends

- Place a small ball in your elbow crease and hold in place
- Standing, or sitting, with the arm straight, bend your elbow and then straighten again.
- Repeat 10 times.

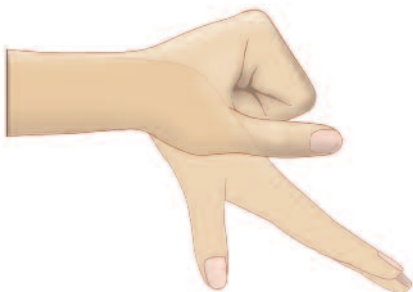


Exercise 9 Wrist Bends/Circles



- Bend the wrist forward and down, so your finger tips point to the floor.
- Raise the wrist up and back, so your finger tips point to the ceiling.
- Repeat 5 times.
- Rotate the wrist clockwise 5 times.
- Rotate the wrist anti-clockwise 5 times.

Exercise 10 Making a Fist



- Make a fist with your affected hand.
- Slowly straighten your fingers.
- Repeat 5 times.

Repeat Exercise 1 Breathing Exercises



Repeat these exercises _____ times daily