

FirstHealth

REHABILITATION

Lymphedema Management

Can lymphedema be prevented?

If you have had cancer treatment or your lymph nodes have been removed, and you don't have lymphedema, one of our therapists can help you identify and manage risks that you can control to avoid it.

What is lymphedema?

The lymphatic system plays a major role in immune function and circulation. The main purpose of the lymphatic system is to filter/drain waste products/lymph fluid from our body. Lymph fluid is moved through lymph vessels and passes through lymph nodes.

When the lymph vessels can't move lymph fluid back into circulation, the lymph fluid builds up. This causes swelling of the arms and legs. The buildup of lymph fluid is known as lymphedema.

Lymphedema occurs when the lymph nodes and vessels have been removed or are missing, damaged or impaired. Other causes include traumatic injury, severe chronic venous insufficiency (pooling of blood in the veins) or heredity.

Lymphedema management consists of:

- **Manual Lymph Drainage (MLD):** A gentle hands-on technique (light massage), to manually move the flow of lymph fluid from the swollen arms and/or legs.

- **Compression:** The affected limb is bandaged to create a graduated compression that reduces the swelling. Once the limb has decreased to the desired size, your therapist will help you find a garment that best meets your needs.
- **Therapeutic Exercise:** A safe and sensible exercise plan to help move lymph fluid from the limb and improve your physical fitness without straining your affected arm or leg.
- **Lifestyle Tips:** To decrease future fluid buildup and reduce the risk of infection.

When You Need Rehab...You Need FirstHealth

When you need rehabilitation services, you have a choice of where to receive treatment. We hope you will choose one of our convenient locations.

Pinehurst

Aviemoore Drive Center
12 Aviemoore Drive, Pinehurst, NC 28374
(910) 715-2600

Rockingham

Located in FirstHealth Fitness-Richmond
120 Richmond Memorial Drive,
Rockingham, NC 28379
(910) 410-9539

For more information on FirstHealth Rehabilitation or Lymphedema Management, call (910) 715-1600 or e-mail rehab@firsthealth.org.

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PO Box 3000 • Pinehurst NC 28374

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www.firsthealth.org/rehab

