



Lymphoedema Department

A Guide to your First Appointment

Welcome to the Lymphoedema Department

We have received a referral for you to come to the Lymphoedema Clinic for an assessment.

This information leaflet is to help you prepare for your first appointment.

What to expect

You will be seen by one of the Lymphoedema Nurses. The first appointment may take approximately 1 – 1 ½ hours.

- Your referral letter might not have many details in it. You will be asked about the 'story' of your swelling – when it first started, what may make it worse or better, what treatment you have had for it (if any)
- You will be asked about your general health, what medications you take and your lifestyle (work, hobbies etc)
- You may need to undress to your underwear. This will allow the nurse to look at your swelling, as well as the area around it
- The nurse will want to examine you by feeling the swelling to assess what the tissues of your skin are like. This should not be painful, but if you are uncomfortable, they will stop
- Weight management is an important part of managing both lymphoedema and lipoedema. As part of your assessment, the nurse may weigh you. This gives them and you a baseline (starting point) to work from
- The nurse may measure the area of swelling. Measurements will be taken of both limbs/both sides whether they are swollen or not. This allows a comparison of what is the usual size of the area. These measurements provide a starting point to check how your swelling changes over time and how well your limb(s) respond to treatment.

This information will give your nurse an idea of what is causing your swelling which will allow them to arrange an effective treatment plan for you. This may include:

- Skin care
- Exercise/Movement/Elevation
- Compression garments
- Simple lymph drainage
- Weight management

What to bring

- You may find it useful to bring someone with you to the appointment to take notes. It will help you to remember any information you are given, and may also give you confidence in telling your story
- It may be worth making a note of when you first spotted any symptoms etc and bringing it with you. This will help the nurse to understand your story
- Please bring your prescription list, and also any compression garments you may have used in the past or are currently wearing.

Where to find us

Please check on your letter for which hospital your appointment is scheduled. It could be:

- The Diabetes Centre, 50 Bridport Road, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 2NQ
- Weymouth Community Hospital, in the Surgical Outpatient Department, located through the main hospital entrance
- Blandford Community Hospital, in the Surgical Outpatient Department, located through the main hospital entrance
- In some circumstances you may be seen at home.

We look forward to meeting you.

Please see the enclosed leaflet – Frequently Asked Questions

Contacts:

We hope that you have found this information useful. If you have any questions or are worried about anything, please speak to the following Dorset County Hospital Staff:

Lymphoedema Nurses: Emma Diaz 01305 255370
Dawn Johnston
Lucy Harris

About this leaflet:

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If you have feedback regarding the accuracy of the information contained in this leaflet, or if you would like a list of references used to develop this leaflet, please email pals@dchft.nhs.uk



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