

## Lymphoedema education session

We hold a lymphoedema education session on the first Wednesday of every month (except January) at Calvary Hospital. For more information or to make a booking, contact the Physiotherapy Department on 6201 6190 or email [physio@calvary-act.com.au](mailto:physio@calvary-act.com.au)



## Service locations

The ACT Lymphoedema Service operates from:

- Calvary Public Hospital Bruce
- Belconnen Community Health Centre
- Tuggeranong Community Health Centre
- Canberra Hospital (for patients undergoing treatment in Canberra Region Cancer Centre).

Private lymphoedema services are available in the ACT. To find practitioners, visit [www.lymphoedema.org.au/the-register](http://www.lymphoedema.org.au/the-register)

## Accessing the service

- Your general practitioner (GP), medical specialist, allied health worker, nurse practitioner or registered nurse can refer you to the ACT Lymphoedema Service
- Appointments are free if you hold a current Medicare card.
- There is a cost for compression garments and other items\*.

\*Funding is available for some ACT and NSW residents. We can talk with you about whether you qualify.

## Contact us

ACT Lymphoedema Service  
Calvary Physiotherapy Department  
Phone: 6201 6190  
Fax: 6201 6196  
Email: [physio@calvary-act.com.au](mailto:physio@calvary-act.com.au)

Produced in conjunction with Calvary Hospital  
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# ACT Lymphoedema Service



## Your lymphatic system and lymphoedema

Your lymphatic system is a major part of your body's immune system. It is a network of vessels, organs and nodes that move lymph fluid from your tissues into your blood stream. It helps you to fight off infection.

Lymphoedema is swelling that occurs when lymph fluid builds up in the tissue of one or more areas of your body and does not go away. This happens because your lymphatic system is not working as it should. Lymphoedema normally occurs in an arm or leg but can affect other parts of your body.

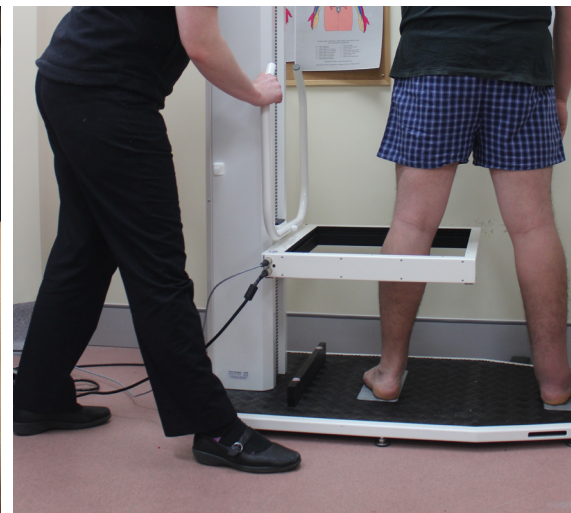
There are two types of lymphoedema:

- **Primary Lymphoedema**  
is a condition you are born with where your body has poorly formed lymphatic vessels and nodes. Swelling may first develop at any stage of your life.
- **Secondary Lymphoedema**  
is caused by blockages or damage to your lymphatic system, including:
  - › surgery to remove lymph nodes
  - › radiotherapy to lymph nodes
  - › an infection – such as cellulitis
  - › venous disease (a condition that affects your veins)
  - › being overweight/obesity
  - › filariasis (an infectious tropical disease)
  - › lymphatic trauma.

## Managing your lymphoedema

Working with your lymphoedema therapist you can develop a management plan that may include:

- measuring and fitting you with compression garments. These may range from:
  - › prescription of sleeves or stockings to help minimise your risk of lymphoedema
  - › custom made compression garments for people who have developed swelling
- looking after your skin to help reduce bacterial or fungal infections
- application of compression bandages
- using compression pumps (intermittent pneumatic compression). Compression pumps have an inflatable arm or leg sleeve with multiple chambers that inflate one after the other to stimulate lymphatic flow in the right direction.
- low level laser therapy. A low level laser beam is applied to affected tissues to minimise signs and symptoms of lymphoedema.



## Early detection following surgical removal of lymph nodes

If you have had a number of lymph nodes removed, you may be eligible to participate in the ACT Lymphoedema Service early detection program. This program includes:

- bio-impedance spectroscopy (a way of measuring the amount of fluid in affected limbs only)
- regular appointments
- exercise to regain or maintain joint range of motion
- education about how to reduce your risk of developing lymphoedema
- prescription of compression garments.