



# **Lipoedema** Surgical Solution

*walk with freedom*

It is our mission and our duty to ensure every patient with Lipoedema maintains appropriate health to avoid significant circulatory and mobility issues, as well as optimise their health and treatment outcomes.

# The Treatment *Journey*



## CONSULTATION & DIAGNOSIS

- The goal of the initial consultation is to record the patient's background information, measurements and photos, as well as to perform an examination.
- Patients will be holistically assessed to determine other underlying conditions. Onsite ultrasound will be used to assess the extent of Lymphoedema, varicose veins and other causes for leg swelling.
- Conservative management options will be detailed.
- Dr Lekich will provide a diagnosis and a copy of his report will be sent to the patient's nominated GP, medical specialists and allied health practitioners.
- Dr Lekich and the Lipoedema Surgical Solution Team will reassess patients after conservative management to discuss progress and future treatment options in the way of surgery, should they desire.

## CONSERVATIVE MANAGEMENT

There are important pillars of treatment that patients should adopt. These may be a prelude to surgery. However, even if a patient is not considering surgery it is important to ensure all elements of conservative management are understood and implemented, to avoid serious complications of Lipoedema in the long term.

These conservative treatments will be detailed during your initial consultation with Dr Lekich and his team and may include:

- Wearing flat knit compression garments.
- Accommodating possible diet and lifestyle adjustments.
- Undertaking Manual Lymphatic Drainage.

## SURGICAL PROTOCOL

The surgical protocol will be explained to the patient in detail. The essential features of the surgery are:

- Usually bilateral (both legs treated at the same time) to optimise balance, function and form following surgery and remove all the Lipoedema tissue.
- The first stage of surgery is usually on the lower legs or targeting areas that are most problematic regarding mobility. The first surgery significantly improves mobility and reduces the gravity-damaging effects on the most vulnerable part of the legs.
- The second stage of surgery is usually done as a single surgery involving the upper legs, thighs and buttocks.
- The third surgery, if required, is done on the arms.
- The intervals between surgeries is usually 6-8 weeks with continued use of flat knit compression garments and manual lymphatic drainage in the immediate post-operative period.
- The approach and order of surgery may be modified depending on the most impacting effects of the Lipoedema tissue, with patient safety as the main concern.
- Dr Lekich and his team will be available in the post-operative period for continued support.

## THE SURGICAL SOLUTION FOR LIPOEDEMA IS:



### Minimally Invasive

No open surgery, small incision points for waterjet assisted treatment, no long scars.



### Symmetrical

Both legs treated at the same time, starting with the lower legs, to optimise balance, function and form following surgery.



### Holistic

Diagnosis and treatment are underpinned by ultrasound for a complete approach to managing your condition.

## THE ULTIMATE GOAL FOR SURGERY IS:

#1

Remove all the damaging, inflammatory fat to preserve lymphatic health and circulation of the legs. **This is not a cosmetic approach to Liposuction.**

#3

Preserve mobility and reduce degenerative conditions such as arthritis on the hips, knees and ankles by removing the weight that cannot be dieted or exercised away.

#2

Avoid long term dependence on compression garments and manual lymphatic drainage.

#4

Regain freedom from the psychological burden of Lipoedema through the aesthetic improvement that flows from treatment of the medical condition and greater mobility.

## OUR SURGICAL STANDARD

We are a medical clinic, not a cosmetic clinic, focused on taking a holistic approach to your health for the best possible outcomes. Outcomes include your health as a priority; and the aesthetic improvement that flows from the treatment of Lipoedema.

Dr Chris Lekich is the medical director of Lipoedema Surgical Solution and Vein Doctors Group.

Dr Lekich has collaborated with the world's leading Lipoedema Surgeon, Dr Heck, of Germany's LipoClinic. Dr Heck has trained Dr Lekich in Waterjet Assisted Liposuction in both Germany and Australia. This protocol of LipoExtraction has been perfected over 14 years, now making it available in Australia.

Dr Heck and Dr Lekich have a common goal to bring awareness, diagnosis, treatment options and importantly, a surgical solution, to women globally.

Dr Lekich has a long history of treating patients with complex leg conditions with the support of ultrasound guided diagnosis and treatments. Dr Lekich has over 20 years of operating theatre experience ranging from complex microsurgery to intricate modern, non-invasive ultrasound-guided interventions for the treatment of venous and lymphatic conditions.

*Any surgical procedure carries risks. Patients should seek a second opinion.*





# HOW DOCTORS & THERAPISTS CAN SUPPORT PATIENTS

There are many ways that Doctors and Therapists can support patients with Lipoedema. Some of these support programs are outlined below. A full list of support programs and initiatives including links and reference articles can be viewed on our website.

[www.lipoedemasurgicalsolution.com](http://www.lipoedemasurgicalsolution.com)

## 3. Compression Garment Schemes (State Based)

Patients that suffer with secondary Lymphoedema may be eligible for the provision or subsidy of compression garments. The eligibility, subsidy and prescriber guidelines differ between states. A comprehensive list of state-based subsidies can be found on the website of the Australian Lymphology Association. Patients are encouraged to do their own research regarding what they may be entitled to and who is the best doctor or therapist to prescribe their compression garment scheme.

## 4. Documentation for Private Health Insurance

Patients may be eligible for rebates towards equipment and services from their private health insurer to assist with the management of their chronic disease and associated pain. Rebates may cover items such as compression garments, mobility aids or a sequential intermittent pneumatic compression therapy pump. Patients are encouraged to discuss their condition and rebate eligibility with their insurer directly and also work with their GP for necessary documentation.

## 5. Disabled Parking Permit

Dependent on state-based rules, a disabled parking permit may be appropriate for patients with advanced Lipoedema who suffer with pain and who have mobility issues.

## 6. Additional Resources for Doctors, Practitioners and Patients

Additional resources for Doctors and Practitioners can be found on our website including:

- An Overview for Clinicians: Lipedema. The Disease They Call Fat.
- Best Practice Guidelines. The Management of Lipoedema.
- Lipedema. A Giving Smarter Guide.

## 1. Chronic Disease Management Plan

A Chronic Disease Management Plan is a GP referred service available on the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS), which enables GPs to plan and coordinate the health care of patients with chronic medical conditions, including patients with these conditions who require multidisciplinary, team-based care from a GP and at least two other healthcare providers.

Recommended allied health providers for Lipoedema patients may include:

- Physiotherapist for manual lymphatic drainage (MLD) and compression prescription;
- Podiatrist to help with gait issues;
- Exercise physiologist to help with strengthening knees and core, assist with rehabilitation, improve fitness and assist with weight loss;
- Occupational therapist for patients with mobility impairment;
- Dietitians and nutritionists who will be helpful in assisting Lipoedema patients to determine a suitable nutrition plan that includes anti-inflammatory focus, low carb and high good-fat foods and clean eating (no additives). Further, literature recommends avoiding caloric restriction as this can worsen Lipoedema.

## 2. Mental Health Care Plan

A Mental Health Care Plan is a GP referred plan for people with a mental health disorder, such as depression, anxiety, body dysmorphia or eating disorders. The patient may be entitled to Medicare rebates, coordinated by their GP, for up to 10 individual or group appointments with a psychologist, occupational therapist or social worker. Women with Lipoedema are often psychologically burdened by this chronic disease.

“ Lipoedema Surgical Solution offers a surgical protocol that I have adopted in Australia in collaboration with my mentor Dr Heck, from Germany’s LipoClinic. Dr Heck has perfected this surgery in Germany over the last 14 years and I am proud to be the first adopter of this protocol in Australia. The standard of surgery is minimally invasive, not requiring open surgery. This Lipo-Extraction protocol is a medical treatment for Lipoedema of the legs and arms to arrest the disease. This is not a cosmetic, plastic surgery approach. If all the diseased tissue is removed, it should not come back. ”



## Dr Lekich

## ABOUT LIPOEDEMA

Lipoedema is a chronic condition characterised by a painful and abnormal accumulation of fat cells in the hips, thighs, buttocks, legs and sometimes arms. The legs may become swollen, bruise easily, feel tender and uncomfortable.

Sufferers of early stage Lipoedema often have column-shaped legs and as the condition worsens the fat continues to build up and the lower half of their body becomes heavier. The lipoedemic fat can also build up in the arms. **The fat cannot be exercised or dieted away.** Many patients eat well and exercise, yet continue to develop fat on their lipoedemic areas.

The condition almost exclusively affects women and it is estimated that 1 in 10 women suffer with Lipoedema. The most common time of onset of Lipoedema is during puberty or pregnancy, which leads experts to believe that the condition may occur due to changes in hormones.

**The condition is poorly understood and often dismissed as obesity. If not diagnosed and managed properly Lipoedema can result in further complications including reduced mobility, venous conditions and lymphoedema; as well as depression, anxiety, body dysmorphia or eating disorders.**

Sufferers can experience emotional and psychological damage due to receiving a lack of diagnosis and support from practitioners and family.

There are a range of conservative management treatment options available to sufferers, as well as a surgical solution.

## ABOUT DR LEKICH

Dr Lekich has been trained by and succeeded the practices of four luminary surgeons. Not only did they nurture Dr Lekich with the great privilege of their training, but they also entrusted their practices and their patients into his care upon their retirement.

These luminary surgeons include Professor Earl Owen (AO, Legion d’Honneur) (NSW) who was a world pioneering microsurgeon famed with the world’s first hand transplant and double hand transplants; and one of Australia’s most prominent vascular surgeons, Dr William Campbell Snr (Qld) acclaimed for advancing modern techniques in the management of venous disease.

Dr Lekich has worked in operating theatres for over 20 years starting with his pursuits in eye microsurgery, followed by minimally invasive management of venous and lymphatic disease in the legs.

In his venous practice, Dr. Lekich has conservatively managed Lipoedema for over 10 years. He shifted to the surgical management of the disease once he established the purpose built licensed Miami Private Hospital and training in Germany with Dr Heck.

Dr Lekich has collaborated with the world’s leading Lipoedema Surgeon, Dr Heck, of Germany’s LipoClinic, with surgery training on several occasions in Germany, as well as in Australia. The pair have hosted Information Events to educate the world of the condition.

Dr Heck and Dr Lekich have a common goal to bring awareness, diagnosis, treatment options and importantly, a surgical solution, to women globally.

Apart from Dr Lekich’s specialised training in microsurgery, minimally invasive management of venous disease and Lipoedema surgery, he has a formal law degree, has been admitted to the Bar and has completed a Masters of Business Administration.





## ABOUT OUR FACILITY

Lipoedema surgery is performed at Miami Private Hospital. The location of the hospital on Australia's Gold Coast, means our interstate and international patients find it a pleasant and convenient location to recover after surgery.

Miami Private Hospital is licensed by Queensland Health and has the highest level of accreditation underpinned by a full medical advisory committee. Dr Lekich is the Chief Executive Officer of Miami Private Hospital and a member of the Advisory Committee to ensure the highest standard of surgery is met in this specialised hospital for Lipoedema and Venous surgery.

As this is a licensed hospital there is not the limitation to the amount of fat that can be removed, such as the 2.5 litre limitations on plastic and cosmetic surgeons performing these surgeries in an outpatient setting.

Miami Private Hospital offers specialist anaesthetists monitoring and administering twilight sedation to ensure the availability of all levels of anaesthesia requested by the patient.

The hospital's onsite ultrasound service allows for pre and post-operative scanning by expert sonographers.



**Lipoedema**  
Surgical Solution

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**AUSTRALIA WIDE**

HEAD OFFICE

Miami Private Hospital & Specialist Centre  
24 Hillcrest Parade, Miami, QLD 4220



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