

Conservative Management for Lipoedema

You consulted with Dr Lekich and his team regarding Lipoedema. We thank you for trusting us with your care.

Dr Lekich would like you to consider the following information and correspond with us if and when you require any further help.

We recommend the following conservative management for Lipoedema patients and we have a Lipoedema Support Register on our website where you can find Lipoedema-aware therapists and resources.

Please understand, you must be responsible for driving the conservative measures for Lipoedema. It is VITAL that you understand, it is only YOU that can be compliant with conservative measures that make living with Lipoedema the best it can possibly be.

- 1. Compression** – The role of compression is vital as it helps reduce the swelling by encouraging the flow of the lymphatic fluids out of the affected limbs. The longer you are not in compression, the more scarred your lymphatic system can become. Start where you feel most comfortable. Ask your online support community for advice. They will be able to give you contacts you can follow up. Your MLD therapist will be extremely helpful also and will be able to assist you with your compression garment. Ideally you will progress to FLAT KNIT, waist to foot, Class II compression garments. These are custom made and unfortunately, can be expensive. However, the pain levels of patients with lipoedema are better managed with Flat Knit Class II Compression Garments. If you have a health care card or are registered with NDIS you may be eligible for funding towards your compression. A health fund rebate may also be available. Further, you may require clearance of your arterial system to safely wear compression. Please note, compression of this form is CUSTOM made and can take up to 4 weeks to be produced. These are part of our surgical protocol.
- 2. Manual Lymphatic Drainage Therapy** – MLD benefits Lipoedema patients by removing excess fluid from the lymphatic system. Weekly MLD will help your lymphatic system function as best as it can. Please make sure you find yourself a therapist that knows lipoedema well. Again, your online community will be a great help on this matter. Ask your therapist to teach you some home techniques to stimulate your lymphatic system, this may include Dry Brushing. MLD is part of our surgical protocol.
- 3. Lymphatic Pump System** – This system does not replace the need for MLD, however in addition to MLD, it can be extremely beneficial. Intermittent pneumatic compression mimics the body's lymphatic drainage and promotes the circulation of blood / fluid throughout the body. Please seek the guidance of your MLD therapist, they will direct you to the right pump and provide you an appropriate treatment plan. Your therapist will also be able to write the prescription that is required to obtain the lymphatic pump such as the Lympha-press. Please note, the lymphatic pump system is not part of our surgical protocol, however, it is highly worth considering.
- 4. Diet & Lifestyle** – It is important to note that there is evidence that low inflammatory, no sugar, very low carbohydrate diets with high good fats and no caloric restriction helps to reduce pain and inflammation in lipoedema patients. It also assists in weight loss. We recommend that you consult with a Nutritionist or Dietician that works with Lipoedema patients and knows the disease well. Do not start this on your own, you must get professional advice to support the implementation of this lifestyle change. We are all different, so it is never, one size fits all. Enquire with us if you need assistance to find one.
- 5. Exercise/Yoga/Meditation** – Daily low intensity activities which include walking, water- based exercises, yoga, pilates and the use of resistance bands, are important for overall health and help with reducing inflammation. Water- aerobics, hydrotherapy and other forms of gentle exercise in the pool may be particularly beneficial as water reduces strain and aids the range of motion in joints. It has also been noted that relaxation techniques that involve deep breathing exercises such as yoga and meditation, can significantly benefit your overall well being and assist in the reduction of fluid retention. Consider getting guidance by an exercise physiologist/physiotherapist.
- 6. Counselling** – Dr Lekich may recommend that some psychological support is required. The burden of carrying the emotional and physical effects of lipoedema can be truly overwhelming. Dr Lekich sees the journey through lipoedema as many pieces to a puzzle. Emotional wellbeing plays a vital part in our overall health. Take the time to get all the help that is correct for you. You may be able to obtain a mental health care plan from your GP which gives you 6 sessions with a rebate from Medicare.
- 7. Skin Care** – Careful skin care reduces the load on your lymphatic system and skin breakdown. Please make sure you are using a good quality, natural hydrating product that is suitable for your skin.

A chronic health care plan can be organised by your GP to assist with some of the above management. Dr Lekich or his team of doctors will write to your nominated support team including your GP, specialists and therapists outlining your condition.

**Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require further information.
Don't forget to check the Lipoedema Support Register on our website.**

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF.

