



Lymphedema Treatment

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Medical Guideline Disclaimer

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Definitions

<p>Complex decongestion physiotherapy (CDP) (AKA manual lymph drainage [MLD] therapy)</p>	<p>A noninvasive regimen for the reduction of lymphedema. Each CDP session typically consists of 4 phases:[*]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Skin care: Cleansing, lubrication, debriding and administration of antimicrobial therapy.2. MLD:[†] Gentle massage technique intended to redirect lymph and edema fluid towards adjacent functioning lymph nodes.3. Multi-layered compression wrapping (bandages): For the prevention of any reaccumulation of excavated edema fluid and the ultrafiltration of additional fluid into the interstitial space.4. Individualized exercise with compression wrapping: In order to enhance lymphatic flow from peripheral to central drainage components, these exercises are aimed at augmenting muscular contraction, enhancing joint mobility, strengthening the limb and reducing the muscle atrophy that frequently occurs secondary to lymphedema. <p>The expected duration of the physical therapy education session normally lasts 1– 4 weeks, with the patient attending 3– 7 times per week, depending on the progress of the therapy. This time frame is generally sufficient for the necessary teaching and instruction prerequisite for the care to be continued by the patient/caregiver in the home setting. Initially, MLD may be administered in 2 sessions per day if the</p>
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* The optimal care plan should be to include the transfer of the responsibility of care from providers in the outpatient setting to the patient in the home setting, whereby the care is provided by the patient/family/caregiver.

† MLD must be performed by a certified manual lymph drainage therapist.

Pneumatic compression devices	lymphedema is severe, with the most significant improvement achieved within the 1 st week. Used for the treatment of acute and chronic peripheral lymphedema to facilitate the mobilization of fluid from the limbs into the trunk and central body cavity. These devices have also been used in the treatment of venous stasis, venous and arterial ulcers and for the prevention of deep vein thrombosis. Pneumatic compression devices generally consist of an inflatable garment for the arm or leg and an electrical pneumatic pump that fills the garment with compressed air. The garment is intermittently inflated and deflated with cycle times and pressures that vary among devices. Designed for use in both the home and institutional settings, the devices are generally intended to assist patients suffering from peripheral and vascular disorders, including primary or secondary lymphedema. The devices are currently used in both the primary and adjunctive treatment of lymphedema.
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Guideline

For pneumatic compression devices, please refer to [Noridian Local Coverage Determination \(LCD\) for Pneumatic Compression Devices](#).

CDP is considered medically necessary when **any** of the following are applicable:

1. Intractable lymphedema of the extremities that is unrelieved by elevation
2. Lymphedema that interferes with activities of daily living (ADL) performance, mobility and/or safety
3. Lymphedema with evidence of ulceration

Documentation

Initial evaluation and treatment — all:

1. MD diagnosis of lymphedema with an order for CDP
2. A statement as to the ability of the patient/caregiver to follow through with the continuation of treatment on a long-term treatment plan
3. Written treatment plan by the physician or therapist who will provide the treatment after an appropriate assessment of the condition; which includes all of the following:
 - a. Specific short- and long-term goals
 - b. Type, amount, frequency and duration of the services
 - c. Body area(s) to be treated
 - d. Date that therapy was initiated
4. History and physical must include all the following:
 - a. Cause of lymphedema
 - b. Prior treatment history
 - c. Body part/extremity measurement prior to treatment initiation
 - d. Specific areas of indurated tissue, rigidity of edema, condition of nails and skin, infected sites, scars, distal pulses, pain and discomfort

- e. Effect on the patient's ability to perform ADLs
- f. Prior services/modalities performed including a response to treatment

Continuation of treatment — all:

1. The services/modalities performed, inclusive of treatment response
2. A report demonstrating the therapeutic progress, inclusive of periodic measurements, as applicable
3. Demonstration of the patient/caregiver assimilation of the education, coupled with their ability to assume some of the treatment responsibilities

Limitations/Exclusions

Decompressive physical therapy will be covered for up to a 4 week course based upon the severity and location of the edema. On-going requests for further therapy must be reviewed by the Plan for medical necessity.

CDP is not covered for **any** of the following conditions:

1. Acute infection of the body part
2. Venous or arterial obstruction
3. Confirmed or suspected local disease or active malignancy

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Applicable Procedure Codes

97016	Application of a modality to one or more areas; vasopneumatic devices
97140	Manual therapy techniques (eg, mobilization/ manipulation, manual lymphatic drainage, manual traction), one or more regions, each 15 minutes
A4600	Sleeve for intermittent limb compression device, replacement only, each
E0650	Pneumatic compressor, nonsegmental home model
E0651	Pneumatic compressor, segmental home model without calibrated gradient pressure
E0652	Pneumatic compressor, segmental home model with calibrated gradient pressure
E0655	Nonsegmental pneumatic appliance for use with pneumatic compressor, half arm
E0657	Segmental pneumatic appliance for use with pneumatic compressor, chest.
E0660	Nonsegmental pneumatic appliance for use with pneumatic compressor, full leg
E0665	Nonsegmental pneumatic appliance for use with pneumatic compressor, full arm
E0666	Nonsegmental pneumatic appliance for use with pneumatic compressor, half leg
E0667	Segmental pneumatic appliance for use with pneumatic compressor, full leg
E0668	Segmental pneumatic appliance for use with pneumatic compressor, full arm
E0669	Segmental pneumatic appliance for use with pneumatic compressor, half leg
E0670	Segmental pneumatic appliance for use with pneumatic compressor, integrated, 2 full legs and trunk

E0671	Segmental gradient pressure pneumatic appliance, full leg
E0672	Segmental gradient pressure pneumatic appliance, full arm
E0673	Segmental gradient pressure pneumatic appliance, half leg
E0676	Intermittent limb compression device (includes all accessories), not otherwise specified
S8950	Complex lymphedema therapy, each 15 minutes

Applicable ICD-10 Codes

I89.0	Lymphedema, not elsewhere classified
I97.2	Postmastectomy lymphedema syndrome
Q82.0	Hereditary lymphedema