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Lymphedema Association of Ontario  
Professional Directory  
And Resource Guide

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# Our Mission

We are committed to improving the lives of people living with lymphedema.

## Our History

We've been doing this since 1996. Our founders, a group of lymphedema patients and family members, responded to the absence of support services by setting up the LAO. Since then, we have expanded our scope. We have always kept the needs of people living with lymphedema front and centre. The LAO's work continues to be made possible by our volunteers, donors and members.

The LAO started its life as the Lymphovenous Association of Ontario. We are registered with the Charities Directorate in this name. In 2010 we changed our everyday name to the Lymphedema Association of Ontario. Why? To more actively promote lymphedema education, prevention, treatment and quality of life for those with the condition.

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# New Juzo Seamless Foot Portion, Glove & Gauntlet

Seamless Compression for Lymphedema



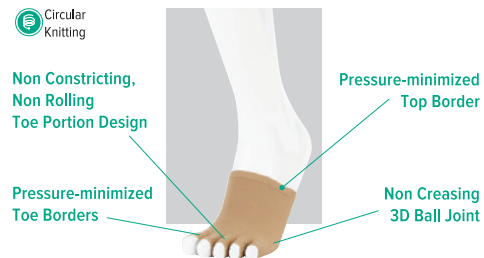
## New Juzo Soft Seamless Glove & Gauntlet

The anatomical shape of fingers and thumb, along with the enclosure of the thumb webbing ensure a precise and comfortable fit and ease of donning. The innovative 3D comfort zone in the sensitive area between the thumb and index finger prevents the fabric from creasing and protects the skin from irritation. It is designed not to restrict the thumb movement in any way.



## New Juzo Seamless 2300 Foot Portion

The knitted length of the toes ensures additional stability and easy donning. The 3D comfort zone in the sensitive area between the big toe and the ball of the foot has an anatomical shape. This allows a precise fit and prevents the fabric from creasing, protecting the skin from irritation and providing a high wearing comfort. Standard sizes S - 2XL.



# 6 Things Patients Should Know About Lymphedema

## 1) What causes lymphedema?

Lymphedema is a chronic inflammatory condition and is characterized by chronic swelling that can occur in any area of the body

- Head/Neck
- Genitals
- Chest wall/breast
- Limbs

## 3) What are the potential complications of lymphedema?

Some complications of lymphedema include:

- Reduced mobility
- Cellulitis
- Chronic pain
- Psycho-social impacts
- Limited ADLs

## 5) What are the signs and symptoms of lymphedema?

Some of the signs and symptoms of lymphedema include:

- Heaviness
- Aching
- Swelling

## 2) What is lymphedema?

Any condition that overwhelms the lymphatic system

### PRIMARY

- Hereditary
- Congenital

### SECONDARY

- Obesity
- Venous disease
- Many cancers and their treatments (*lymph node dissection, radiation*)
- Surgical intervention
- Trauma
- Immobility
- Infection

## 4) Can lymphedema be treated by medication?

No medications exist to treat the lymphatic system

- Antibiotics and antifungals are used to treat cellulitis infections

## 6) What is the gold standard for treating lymphedema?

There is no cure for lymphedema but treatment exists called Complete Decongestive therapy, including:

- Manual lymphatic drainage
- Skin care
- Exercise and healthy eating
- Compression therapy

## Prevalence of Lymphedema for Canadians

	Canada 1 million for 36 million population*	Ontario 388,920 for 4 million population**
Chronic Venous Insufficiency: Undetermined		
Morbid obesity related	57%	
Cancer related	31%	
Disabilities/Chair Bound	8%	
Surgeries (non-cancer)	4%	
Primary lymphedema	2%	
	570,000	221,684
	310,000	120,565
	83,000	31,114
	40,000	15,557
	20,000	7,778

\*Mean incidence of cancer related lymphedema from systemic reviews

- All cancers: 15%
- Breast cancer: 18%
- Melanoma: 18% lower extremity 3% upper extremity
- Head and neck: 4%
- Gynecological: 20% uterine, cervical, vulva
- Genitourinary: 10% prostate, bladder, penile
- Sarcoma: 30%

Reference: Shaitelman et al 2015

\*USA up to 10 million LE (Stanford) extrapolated to Canada = 1 million. Canadian Lymphedema Framework 2018 \*\*National Census 2016. All numbers shown are approximate. This information does not replace the knowledge, expertise, skill and judgement of health care providers. It is not meant to be used for diagnosis or treatment.

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# Lymphedema Information

Lymphedema is chronic swelling of a body part caused by an accumulation of lymph fluid. If you have had cancer treatment, surgery, trauma or a genetic deficiency that has affected your lymph nodes, you are at a lifetime risk.

The Lymphatic System Lymph is a colourless fluid which forms in the body and normally drains back into the blood circulation through a network of lymph vessels and lymph nodes. The lymphatic system plays an important part in the body's defense against infection.

## How Lymphedema Occurs

If the drainage routes through the lymphatic system become blocked or damaged, lymph accumulates in the tissues and swelling occurs. Unlike other edemas, lymphedema leads to changes in the tissues, such as fibrosis and an increased risk of infection. The swelling can then become even more difficult to control. Types of Lymphedema Primary lymphedema develops as a result of a malfunctioning lymphatic system, usually as a result of genetic underdevelopment. Secondary lymphedema is the result of damage to lymphatic pathways. This may be a result of treatment for cancer following surgery or radiation therapy. Lymphedema can also occur as a result of infection, severe injury, burns, or any other trauma or surgery that causes damage to the lymphatic nodes and vessels. Lymphedema affects all ages and may occur months/ years after surgery, so it is important to understand and manage the life-long risk.

## Lymphedema Symptoms

The signs and symptoms for lymphedema may include:

- A full or heavy feeling in the affected limb
- A feeling of tightness in the skin
- Less movement or flexibility in the hand, wrist, shoulder or ankle
- Clothing or jewelry feels tight in one specific area
- Abnormal swelling in the affected area

Unfortunately, some people are told that nothing can be done to help. Many doctors are either not knowledgeable or are unaware of where to refer their patients for advice. Although there is no cure, there is help to manage this life-long condition. Lymphedema Management The goal of lymphedema treatment is to help reduce and control swelling, prevent it from getting worse and decrease the chance of complications. Ongoing self-care is crucial. The standard treatment is called Complete Decongestive Therapy (CDT).

The individual elements, used in combination, are: Manual Lymph Drainage (MLD)—a specialized massage to redirect lymph fluid Compression therapy—elastic bandaging, compression sleeves, gauntlets or tights Exercise—to promote lymphatic flow by activating muscle and joint pumps Excellent skin care—the use of antibacterial cleansers and pH neutral lotions. The treatments must be performed by an experienced and certified therapist who has completed

at least 135 hours of post graduate training specific to lymphedema. We can help you find a certified therapist near you. Early diagnosis and treatment are vital to control lymphedema.

**Precautions & Recommendations Infections**

With damaged or blocked lymph drainage, you are at risk of infection (particularly cellulitis) in the affected area. Good skin care reduces the risk of infection.

If you feel generally unwell or have any sign of infection (fever, nausea, vomiting or a hot, red, tender, swollen limb) do not delay in seeking medical attention immediately. In most circumstances you will require antibiotics.

**AVOID**

- ❌ Cuts
- ❌ Scratches
- ❌ Burns
- ❌ Razors
- ❌ Insect bites
- ❌ Fungal infection
- ❌ Sunburn

**USE**

- ✔️ Rubber gloves
- ✔️ Gardening gloves
- ✔️ Oven gloves
- ✔️ Electric shaver
- ✔️ Insect repellents
- ✔️ Hygiene/skin care
- ✔️ Strong sunscreen

**Trauma**

Any trauma or injury to the affected limb will increase your risk of infection and further swelling. AVOID whenever possible: injections, acupuncture, blood sampling and blood pressure readings from the affected limb AND tight or constricting clothing or jewelry PLUS extremes of heat or cold.

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## General Recommendations

- It is important to keep your weight within normal limits as much as possible.
- Try to use the swollen limb normally, as muscular activity encourages lymph drainage, but avoid sudden overexertion, as that may increase swelling.
- If your arm is swollen, avoid lifting or carrying heavy objects. If your leg is swollen, avoid standing or sitting with your legs down for long periods.
- Wear a compression garment when flying to help reduce any increase in swelling.

## Cellulitis

Treat all episodes of cellulitis (infection in subcutaneous tissue) as an urgent medical situation. Know the signs and symptoms of cellulitis skin infection in an area of impaired lymph drainage (signs may include redness, warmth, pain, fever and feeling of overall illness or flu-like symptoms) Cellulitis episodes may lead to worsening lymphedema. If you have more than three episodes of cellulitis in a year, discuss with a health care provider whether your situation warrants using suppressive antibiotics. Please refer to National Lymphedema Network Position Papers on Risk reduction for more information and references: [lymphnet.org/position-papers](http://lymphnet.org/position-papers).



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Taffina Marley RPT  
905-690-9090  
tmarley@movementsolutions.ca  
 


## WATERLOO

Janmari Baas Ross RMT  
519-884-4848  
jan.rossrmt@gmail.com  


Bernadette Tallon RMT  
519-884-4848  
btallonrmt@yahoo.ca  


## WELLAND


Beth Elliott RMT CLT-LANA  
Upper Extremity  
905-788-3214  
b.elliott@NiagaraTherapeutics.com  
 


Jimmy Hong RMT CLT-LANA  
Niagara Therapeutics Inc.  
niagaratherapeutics.com  



## WOODSTOCK

Lindsay Van Asseldonk RMT CLT  
519-602-5562  
woodstockmassagetherapy.com

All therapists listed have provided proof of their CDT certification from a LANA approved school where they received a minimum of 135 hours of post graduate training in lymphedema. **Disclaimer:** Therapists pay to be members of the LAO which includes a listing of their services. The LAO is not responsible for the services performed or rates charged.

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**Sofia Finkel**  
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# General Information

**Financial Assistance:** Professional members: The LAO offers a bursary program that you may nominate your patients for financial assistance

## Our Provincial Partners

- Alberta Lymphedema Association: [albertalymphedema.com](http://albertalymphedema.com)
- Lymphedema Association of New Brunswick: [lymphedemanb.ca](http://lymphedemanb.ca)
- BC Lymphedema Association: [bclymph.org](http://bclymph.org)
- Lymphedema Association of Manitoba: [lymphmanitoba.ca](http://lymphmanitoba.ca)
- Lymphedema Association of Newfoundland and Labrador: [lymphnl.com](http://lymphnl.com)
- Lymphedema Association of Nova Scotia: [lymphedemanovascotia.com](http://lymphedemanovascotia.com)
- Lymphedema Association of Quebec: [infoympho.ca](http://infoympho.ca)
- Lymphedema Association of Saskatchewan: [sasklymph.ca](http://sasklymph.ca)

**Hospital Based Services:** [Lymphontario.ca/hospitals-based-clinics](http://Lymphontario.ca/hospitals-based-clinics)

**Support groups:** [Lymphontario.ca/Support-Groups](http://Lymphontario.ca/Support-Groups)

**Therapist Certification:** Certified lymphedema therapists are health professionals (nurses or doctors) or allied health professionals (physiotherapists, occupational therapists or registered massage therapists) who have gained additional post-graduate certification to specialize in lymphedema care.



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- Professional Standards of Lymphedema Training
- The Lymphology Association of North America (LANA) promotes standards for the management of lymphedema and/or related disorders. LANA advocates for the establishment and maintenance of certification for medical professionals who provide such services.

### Training Programs - North America

- Academy of Lymphatic Studies
- Dr. Vodder School International
- Klose Training & Consulting
- Norton School of Lymphatic Therapy

### Assistive Devices Program (ADP) - ADP Information

ontario.ca/page/assistive-devices-program

Email: adp@ontario.ca 416-327-8804

Phone: Toll free at 1-800-268-6021 or TTY at 1-800-387-5559.

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For forms go to: [Lymphontario.ca/Finance-and-Insurance](http://Lymphontario.ca/Finance-and-Insurance)

### **ADP Registered Authorizers, Fitters, Vendors**

Many of the LE MLD/CDT-Certified Therapists listed on our website are ADP Registered Authorizers. For more information about ADP Registered Authorizers near you email the ADP directly at [adp@ontario.ca](mailto:adp@ontario.ca). [www.ontario.ca/page/garments-pumps-and-braces](http://www.ontario.ca/page/garments-pumps-and-braces).



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<sup>1</sup>Moffat C et al (2012) "A preliminary randomized controlled study to determine the application frequency of a new lymphoedema bandaging system." British Journal of Dermatology 166.3: 624-632.  
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# The Lymphedema Association of Ontario (LAO) offers:

## **SUPPORT**

Offering information on lymphedema treatment, products, resources, CDT certified therapists, registrants of the Assistive Device Program (ADP) and support groups in Ontario through our toll-free information line, email, newsletters and website\*.

## **OUTREACH**

Through our website, newsletter, educational events geared to patients, those at risk and health care professionals.

## **ADVOCACY**

For improved access to treatment and increased health care and insurance coverage.

## **COLLABORATION**

By strengthening partnerships with all stakeholders, promoting research and contributing to a stronger lymphedema community.

*\*We do not provide medical advice or treatment.*

## **Ways to Donate to the LAO**

Donations help to keep the Lymphedema Association of Ontario (LAO) going and help us to grow. With these generous donations we can improve access to quality lymphedema information, resources and services in Ontario. There are many ways for you to support the LAO, go to [www.lymphontario.ca/Donate](http://www.lymphontario.ca/Donate) to see the many ways you can give!



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