

LIVING WITH LYMPHOEDEMA CELLULITIS



Cellulitis is a sudden, non-contagious bacterial infection of the skin, characterised by redness, warmth, swelling and pain. Your body will find it harder to fight infection because your lymphatic system is damaged, so this makes you more susceptible to cellulitis. This infection can then cause more damage, which may cause the swelling to worsen.

How to recognise cellulitis

- This infection can enter your body through a break in the skin, such as an insect bite or scratch, or through an area of skin inflammation such as dermatitis or a fungal or sore nail or through dry cracked skin around your nails
- It's not always possible to identify the cause of infection and an attack can occur without warning.
- The area normally develops a rash or becomes red, hot and tender to touch. Swelling may increase dramatically and pain may occur in the swollen area. For darker skin tones this may appear a darker brown, grey or purple coloration
- You may feel unwell as if you're getting 'flu'. Symptoms can include fever, muscle aches and pains, shivers, headache, nausea and vomiting.

If any symptoms of infection -Act fast

- Seek medical advice immediately, i.e. your GP, or 'out of hours' service, or A&E. DO NOT DELAY. Inform them you have lymphoedema and you have signs of cellulitis. A 2 week course of antibiotics is advised
- If you carry an emergency supply of antibiotics in case of infection for your lymphoedema you can start taking the antibiotics.
- Your antibiotic treatment should run for 14 days and may need to continue for longer if the infection has not settled in this time. It is important you replace the emergency course through your GP so you have them carry with you.
- Stop wearing your compression garment until the infection has cleared.
- Stop any massage and exercise until the infection has cleared.
- Rest and drink lots of water.

Updated: July 2025
01926 838806
www.mytonhospice.org
f t i @MytonHospices

