

Lymphedema

A fluid swelling that's chronic, 1. _____ for months, in any part of the body is likely to be a lymphedema. Although thought to be relatively uncommon it is 2. _____ that at least 100,000 people in the UK have lymphedema. It occurs when the lymphatic system, which is responsible for 3. _____ waste materials away from the tissues, stops working properly.

When the lymphatic system is damaged, fluids 4. _____ in the tissues, 5. _____ swelling. If left untreated, the swelling can become hard and extremely painful. It can 6. _____ any part of the body but most commonly occurs on the limbs.

Lymphedema can be a distressing 7. _____ of surgery for cancer, of the breast or prostate for example, when lymph nodes are 8. _____. Likewise, 9. _____ can cause scar tissue which can damage the lymphatic system. However, three-quarters of lymphedemas occur in patients that 10. _____ cancer. Injury, reduced mobility and problems with the veins can all increase your risk of developing it.

Because the lymphatic system is not well understood, lymphedema has been 11. _____ as a sprained ankle, water retention or swelling from an allergic reaction.

While lymphedema is not 12. _____, there's a great deal that can be done to help, particularly if the condition is caught early. Skin care, bandage, compression 13. _____, exercise and massage can all help to reduce moderate swelling. But treatment needs to be tailored to the individual.

Vocabulary bank:

estimated	radiotherapy	persisting
stockings	accumulate	misdiagnosed
removed	have not had	causing
curable	side effect	draining
		affect