

LYMPHEDEMA: FINDING RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

Lymphedema is a painful swelling that happens when the body's lymphatic fluid is unable to circulate properly and builds up in soft tissues. For individuals undergoing breast cancer treatment and those who are post-treatment, lymphedema can pose new challenges at an already difficult time. There are support services available to assist you.

LYMPHEDEMA

Lymph nodes are small, bean-shaped masses of tissue that are located in clusters throughout the body, including in the armpit. Lymph nodes play a crucial role in helping to fight infection; they filter and trap bacteria, viruses, and other unwanted substances in the body, so that special white blood cells (called lymphocytes) can then destroy them. People with cancer who have undergone lymph node removal and/or radiation as part of their treatment are at risk for developing lymphedema. Lymphedema most commonly occurs in the arms or legs. For more information on lymphedema, read CancerCare's fact sheet titled, "Coping With Lymphedema."



LYMPHEDEMA RESOURCES

Wearing non-elastic bandages or compression garments on the affected limb can help drain the lymph fluid and reduce swelling. It's important to wear a compression garment when flying, even on short flights, as air pressure changes can lead to increased swelling.

For many individuals, the out-of-pocket expense of the garments can be a significant financial challenge. There are some resources that can help individuals in purchasing the lymphedema supplies that they need. Ask your health care team if you should be fitted for a compression garment.

CancerCare

www.cancercares.org
800-813-4673

CancerCare may be able to assist with a one-time grant for the purchase of lymphedema supplies. To determine eligibility, call our Hopeline at 800-813-4673 and speak with an oncology social worker.

All4One LymphedIVAS's Program

www.cancer1source.org

The All4One LymphedIVAS's Program can offer free/or reduced cost supplies for a limited number of women monthly. For more information about financial eligibility and other criteria, visit their website.

National Lymphedema Network

www.lymphnet.org/patients/garment-fund
800-541-3259

The National Lymphedema Network offers a garment fund for women who demonstrate a significant financial need and whose physical therapists are members of their network. For eligibility information, visit their website.

Sister's Network: Breast Cancer Assistance Program

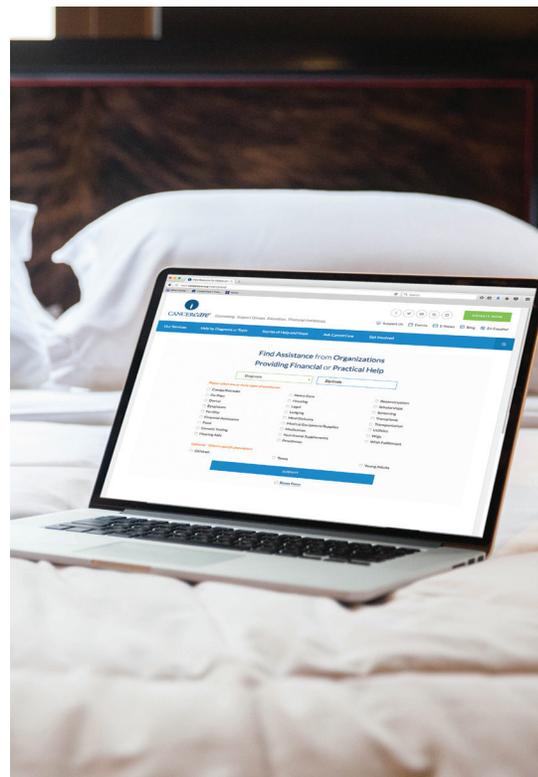
www.sistersnetworkinc.org
866-781-1808

The Sister's Network offers financial assistance for utilities and medical accessories (protheses, medical bras and compression arm sleeves) through their Breast Cancer Assistance Program (BCAP). BCAP is available to breast cancer survivors, individuals currently in treatment and those facing financial challenges.

SEEK SUPPORT

Financial stress often causes emotional stress. Oncology social workers are licensed professionals who counsel people affected by cancer, providing emotional support and helping people access practical assistance. There may be other local organizations that provide assistance for lymphedema supplies. CancerCare's oncology social workers can help you find financial resources to help with these expenses. Call 800-813-HOPE (4673) for more information.

Another resource is CancerCare's A Helping Hand (www.cancercare.org/helpinghand). This is a searchable, online database of financial and practical assistance available for people with cancer. This comprehensive online tool features up-to-date contact information and descriptions for hundreds of national and regional organizations offering financial help to people with cancer. You can search by diagnosis, zip code and type of assistance.



CancerCare® Can Help

Founded in 1944, CancerCare is the leading national organization providing free support services and information to help people manage the emotional, practical and financial challenges of cancer. Our comprehensive services include counseling and support groups over the phone, online and in-person, educational workshops, publications and financial and co-payment assistance. All CancerCare services are provided by professional oncology social workers and world-leading cancer experts.

To learn more, visit www.cancercare.org or call **800-813-HOPE (4673)**.

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