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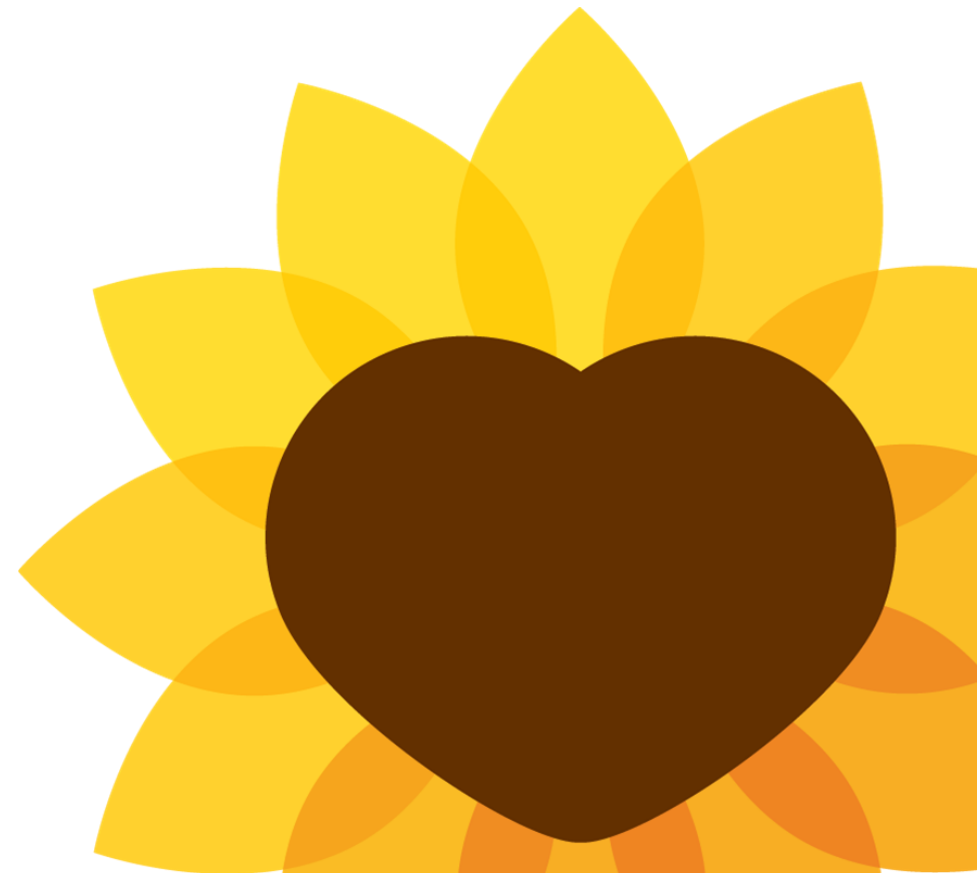
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# Travelling with Lymphoedema

## General points to remember when on holiday



## Introduction

If you are going on holiday and you have lymphoedema, it is possible that the hot weather may make your swelling worse. It is essential to continue with your daily regime of skin care, exercise, simple lymphatic drainage and wearing your compression garments while on holiday.

## Skin care

Try and keep your affected limbs as cool as possible, by keeping them covered whilst travelling or sitting in the sun. Wear protective sun lotion of Factor 30 or above, offering UVA and UVB protection.

Protect yourself against mosquitoes or other biting insects by using insect repellent. If you do get bitten, try not to scratch and use antiseptic and antihistamines to stop or ease itching.



## Italian translation

Ho linfedema cronico che mi rende a rischio di infezione. Credo di avere un'infezione e risolvere questa infezione avrò bisogno di antibiotici.

## Turkish translation

Beni enfeksiyona meyilli yapan kronik lenfödemim var. Sanırım bir enfeksiyonum var ve bu enfeksiyonu gidermek için antibiyotiklere ihtiyacım olacak.

## Greek translation

Έχω χρόνια λεμφοίδημα, που με κάνει να επιρρεπείς σε λοιμώξεις. Νομίζω ότι έχω μια μόλυνση και να επιλύσει αυτή η μόλυνση θα χρειαστεί αντιβιοτικά.

**“I have chronic lymphoedema which makes me prone to infection. I think I have an infection, and to resolve this I will need antibiotics.”**

### **French translation**

J'ai un lymphoedème chronique qui me rend vulnérable à l'infection. Je pense que j'ai une infection et pour résoudre cette infection, je vais avoir besoin d'antibiotiques.

### **Spanish translation**

Tengo linfedema crónico que me hace propenso a la infección. Creo que tengo una infección y para resolver esta infección necesitare antibióticos.

### **German translation**

Ich habe chronisches Lymphödem, das mich anfällig für Infektionen macht. Ich glaube, ich habe eine Infektion und um diese Infektion zu lösen, brauche ich Antibiotika.

Wash your skin after swimming in the sea or swimming pool to remove chemicals or salt from your skin.

### **Exercise**

You should avoid strenuous exercise unless you are used to it.

However, when travelling, you should try and move around as often as you can, stretching and moving all your limbs.

Perform simple clenching / stretching of the hand for your arm swelling, or rotating of the feet / lifting heels from the floor for leg swelling.

Do not forget to do your breathing exercises.

### **Compression garments**

You should always wear your compression when travelling to and from your destination. You should also wear it when walking or exercising, but this is not necessary when swimming.

Don't forget to take a spare compression garment on holiday with you. You can use cold water to spray onto your garment to cool you down. Carry a spare garment with you, which you can keep in a plastic bag in the fridge to keep it cool.

If you are unable to wear your compression garment during the day, then as a last resort you can wear it at night.

## General advice

Before you travel, make sure that your travel insurance covers your lymphoedema. Remember to carry your insurance information with you while you are on holiday.

When travelling with lower limb lymphoedema, wear well fitting supportive shoes, and do not remove them during the journey as you may not be able to get them back on again.

When in a hot country, remember to drink plenty of water. Avoid too much alcohol as this will dehydrate you.

Carry a travel kit which includes the following:

- Good quality sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Antihistamines
- Anti fungal power if you have athletes foot or other fungal infections
- Antiseptic cream for cuts, scratches or bites
- Band aids with antiseptic fabric incorporated to cover a cut, sting, bite or scratch
- Antibiotics.

## Infections

Before you travel, it is a good idea to contact your GP to request antibiotics, just in case you get an infection or are prone to regular infections.

If your limb suddenly appears swollen, hot and red, you should contact a doctor immediately as you may have an infection.

Signs of infection include:

- Flu-like symptoms
- High temperature
- Shaking
- Headache
- Redness
- Warmth from the affected area
- Increased swelling
- Localised heaviness
- Pain.

If you do need to see a doctor, you may find the translations on the next pages useful to explain the situation.