

PROTOCOL FOR HOME CARE DURING COMBINED DECONGESTIVE THERAPY (CDT)©

Each Day of Treatment:

A.M.

After awakening and using the restroom, begin exercises with bandages on. Do each exercise 15x's – 2-3x's/day. Always remember to inhale while at rest and exhale while working during exercising.

Remove bandages and bathe. Do special skin care on the affected area using cleansing products prescribed. Rinse well and allow to dry thoroughly. Apply cream/lotion/ointment to affected areas as outlined.

Apply cotton stockinette over affected limb making sure to eliminate any creases. Next, pad the hand or foot with appropriate padding designed for that part. Then, using roll padding, continue to wrap the limb from farthest to nearest part of the limb (distal to proximal), overlapping each roll about 1/3 as you progress up the limb. Second, third and fourth rolls of padding may be needed to complete the wrap, depending upon the length of the limb and the desired depth of padding necessary to bring about decongestion of the tissues. The padding is to be wrapped snug.

Next apply short stretch roll bandages using the 6cm first on the hand or 8cm first on the foot, as instructed. Begin at the base of the toes or fingers and wrap around 3x's in one place, being sure that the fingers and toes are spread while wrapping. Then follow with a "figure of 8" wrap technique around the wrist or ankle showing 1/4" to 1/2" of the previous wrap as you build up the hand or foot to the wrist or ankle. Good coverage will feel almost like a cast. Be sure to cover the palm of the hand around the thumb, and in the case of the foot, cover the heel adequately. The first bandage will most likely end around the wrist or ankle. Start the second bandage, 8cm for the arm or 10cm for the leg where the first bandage ended, overlapping the bandage showing 1/3 of the previous roll. Third, fourth, or fifth bandage rolls may be necessary to completely cover the limb depending upon the circumference and length of that limb. Check for gradient pressure – most pressure at the hand/wrist or foot/ankle and decreasing as it goes up the limb. Apply any further bandages where you feel weaknesses, usually around or near the wrist

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or ankle and continue up the limb. As each bandage roll is applied over the previous bandage, more of the new bandage is shown as you wrap, e.g. 1st bandage show 1/3; 2nd bandage show 1/2 and thereafter show 1/2 of each bandage applied. Always begin each bandage at the wrist or ankle for gradiency. Secure the last bandage with tape and apply stockinette over entire limb over bandages to prevent bandages from telescoping downward.

Be sure to launder bandages touching the skin every day, e.g. stockinette and finger bandages. Short stretch bandage rolls and padding need not be laundered but once a week, except when they are soiled. Wash in a mild soap, like Dreft or Ivory, in a nylon mesh bag in your washing machine and dry them on low-heat or air cycle of your dryer. Then roll them for next day's use. It is necessary to have 2 sets of bandages, one being worn while the other set is being laundered.

If you feel tightness after bandaging, especially around the joint area (elbow or knee) or near the toes or fingers and it becomes unbearable, remove one bandage at a time until it becomes more comfortable. If the bandages remain uncomfortable, remove all bandage rolls, leaving padding, and rewrap. The most important thing is that there is gradient pressure (most pressure at the farthest point of the limb gradually decreasing up the limb – distal to proximal).

From time to time, check the temperature and color of the toes and fingers – nail beds and skin. If they feel cool or appear blue, the bandages may be too tight. It is important to note that older people may not tolerate tighter bandages as well as a younger person.

In order to achieve maximum lymphedema reduction during CDT, it is necessary to leave bandages on affected limb/limbs 24 hours/day, except when bathing or getting treatment. And, complete skin care should be done each time clean bandages are applied. It is important to rewrap the limb and do skin care A.M. and P.M. to retain maximum compression. Never apply soiled or used bandages over an affected limb – there is always a higher chance of infection with lymphedema.

If you have any questions, please phone (408) 782-1028.

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