

Lympho-Logical Thinking in self management of lymphedema

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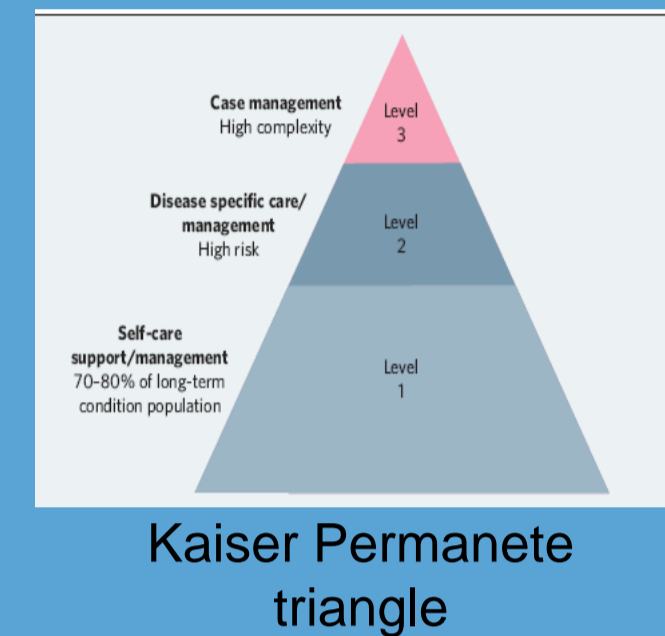
Background

Many patients benefit from knowledge

- 70-80% suffering from chronic conditions such as lymphedema can control their disease with supported self care.

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS:

- How is self care taught?
- What is understood?
- How obtain adherence?



Survey of understanding self care of lymphedema

Experience from a patient organization and 20 years of clinical experience of a lymph therapist indicate

Works:

Guidance through the 4 steps of learning in the areas of :

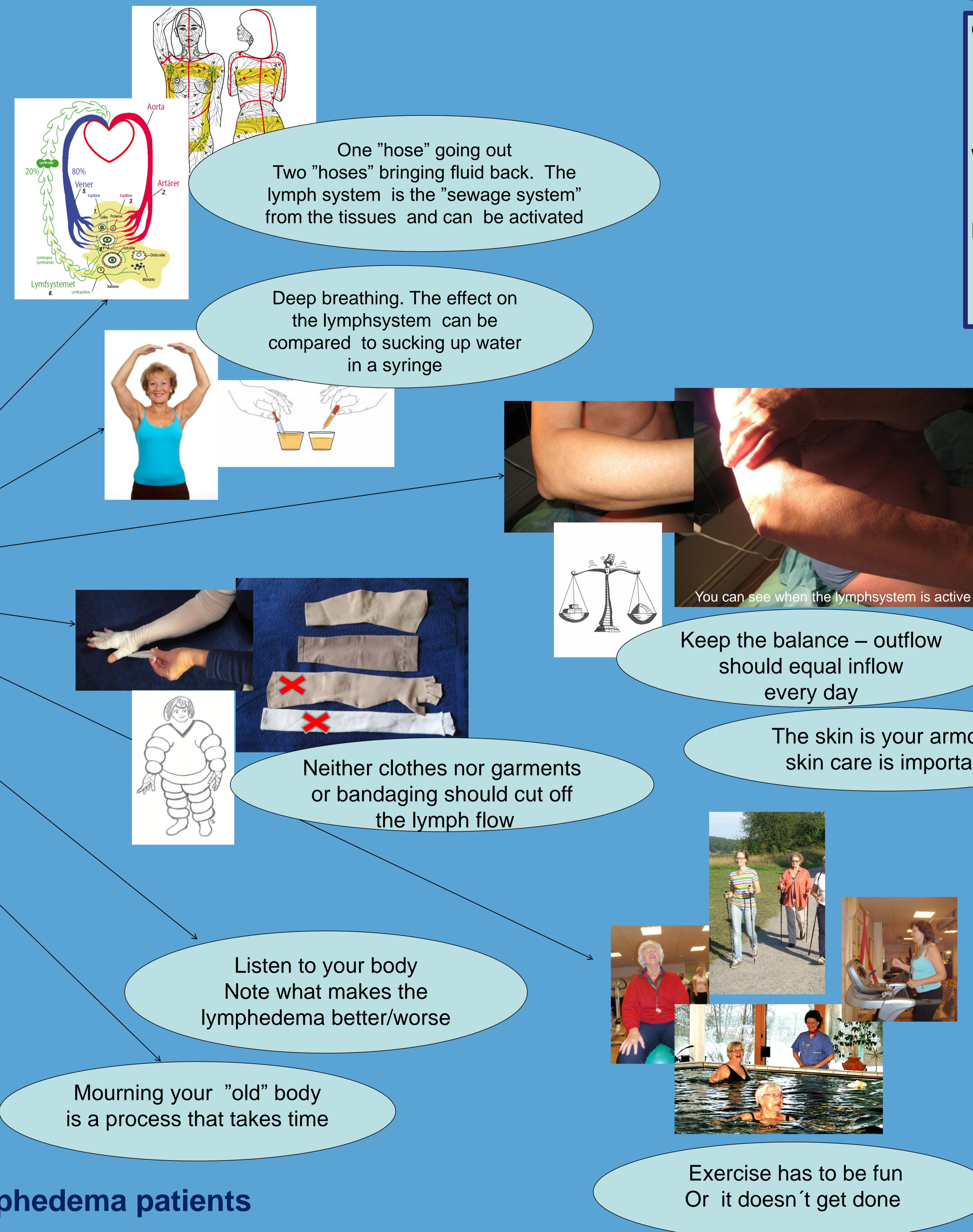
- Anatomy and physiology of the lymph system
- Deep breathing
- Self-MLD and skin care
- Compression techniques
- Physical Exercise
- What makes the swelling worse/better
- Emotional issues

Does not work:

- Hand out a film with repulsive pictures of lymphedema
- Hand out a picture with arrows how to massage
- Compression garment, rubber gloves and instructions sent by mail
- Impatient and demanding therapist
- Compression as sole remedy

What is important to learn and teach

Suggestions of how to simplify and use metaphors in understanding self management of lymphedema



What it takes to learn and teach

Patient

Goal:

Regain control of the body as much as possible

What is needed?

Motivation

How obtain motivation?

Knowledge

Therapist

Goal:

To aid the patient in regaining control of the body

What is needed?

Motivate the patient

What motivates the patient?

Knowledge

Teamwork
Turning knowledge into practice

Conclusions

To understand and apply self care the patient needs:

- To accept the diagnosis lymphedema
- Simple explanations
- Coaching until sure of the "know-hows"
- Feedback - experiencing a result

To teach self care the therapist needs:

- To use simple explanations
- To use metaphors if needed
- Patience with the patient
- To listen to the patient's part of the story
- A pedagogic approach
- Make sure that the patient can reason and act Lympho-Logically when swelling occurs

The 4 steps of learning – for lymphedema patients

- Unconscious incompetence** – no knowledge of the existence of lymphedema management
- Conscious incompetence** – knowledge of the fact that lymphedema can be managed
- Conscious competence** – knowledge of how to manage lymphedema
- Unconscious competence** – managing lymphedema unknowingly

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