

Healthy living and weight management

Being overweight can affect your lymphoedema. It is thought that being overweight exacerbates lymphoedema and makes management less effective.

Due to the position of the lymph nodes, and the complex network of lymphatic vessels under the skin, pressure from an expanded waistline is exerted on the groin resulting in impaired lymphatic drainage.

Losing weight or maintaining a healthy weight also leads to long term health benefits such as increased energy, mobility and morale and reduces your risk of heart problems, Diabetes strokes, and many other diseases including some cancers.

We all have different ideas about how to effectively lose weight but it is now thought that diets are not effective for long term weight loss. Lifestyle changes which include increasing physical activity levels, improving quality of diet, eating slowly, smaller portions, behaviour change, modifying thoughts, support groups.

If your BMI (Body Mass Index, which is your weight to height ratio) is over 35 (with other health issues) or over 40, your GP can refer you to the Specialist Weight Management Centre at The Cumberland Centre.

Livewell Southwest's One You Plymouth service offer a free 12 week weight loss programme for adults (16+) with a body mass index between 26-39. One You Plymouth's free clinics will provide you with an overall picture of your health and wellbeing advice. The clinics take place Monday-Friday across the city and one to one appointments are available to book by calling 01752 437177 or emailing oneyou.plymouth@nhs.net

Exercise

Your lymphatic system does not work effectively without activity. You don't have to go to a gym or spend lots of money either; walking is very effective and even standing regularly rather than sitting for long periods helps your lymphatic system as well as your general circulation.

One You Plymouth also offers organised walks across the city. You can find out more by visiting the [One You Plymouth website](#) or emailing oneyou.plymouth@nhs.net