

QUICK FACTS

- ☑ **More than 1/3 of the body's lymph nodes (over 300) are contained in the head and neck.**
- ☑ **Over 90% of head and neck cancer survivors develop lymphedema.**



HIGHLANDS
ONCOLOGY

Lymphedema Treatment

Provided at:

Springdale

3901 Parkway Circle, Ste 100
Springdale, AR 72762

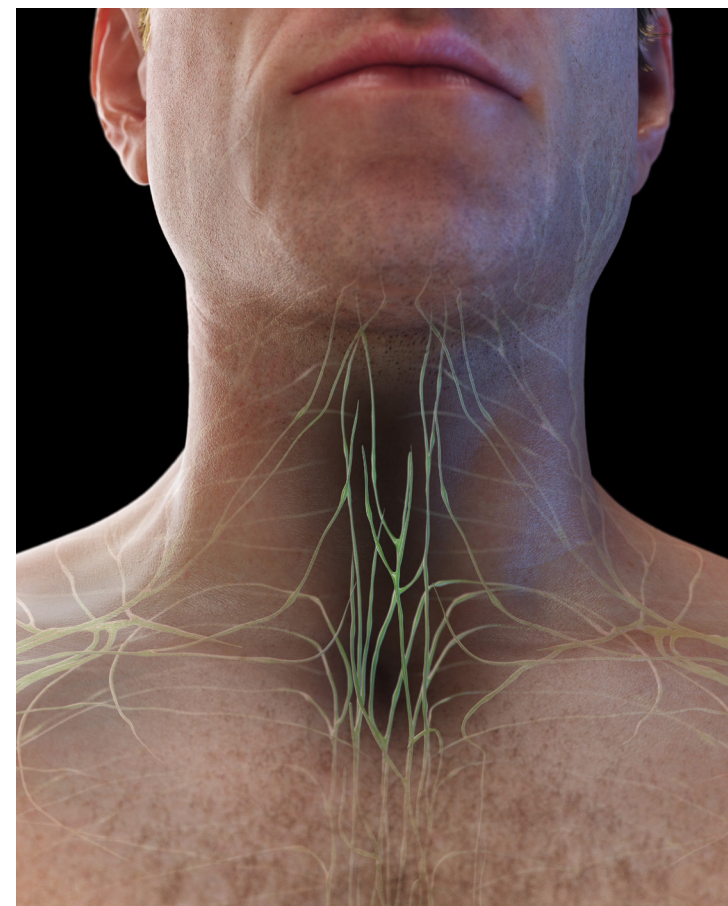
Rogers

808 South 52nd St.
Rogers, AR 72758

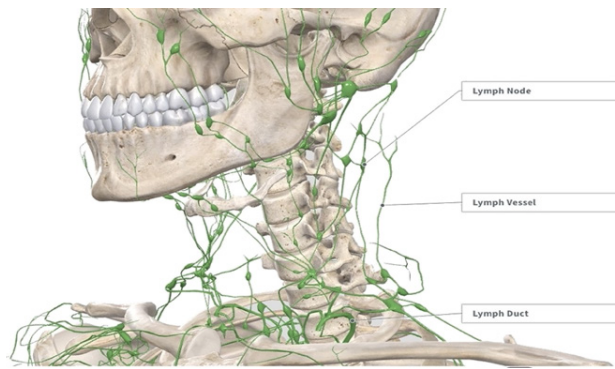
highlandsoncology.com

LYMPHEDEMA

Head & Neck



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WHAT IS HEAD & NECK LYMPHEDEMA?

Swelling of soft tissues due to the accumulation of fluid called lymph.

WHAT CAUSES LYMPHEDEMA?

Surgery and/or radiation disrupt the function of the lymphatic system by removing lymph nodes, cutting lymph vessels, and/or scarring lymphatic capillaries.

WHAT DOES LYMPHEDEMA LOOK LIKE?

Internal and/or external swelling in any part of the face, neck, head.

HOW DOES THIS IMPACT ME?

Internal and/or external swelling can be uncomfortable. If left untreated, swelling may impact one's everyday activities such as eating and swallowing. In addition, patients may experience decreased neck range of motion if lymph fluid remains.

HOW IS IT TREATED?

Complete decongestive therapy with a certified lymphedema therapist. This includes a series of techniques under the direction of a therapist:

- ☑ A form of massage known as manual lymph drainage (MLD)
- ☑ Compression bandages/clothing with special padding
- ☑ Exercises to improve the flow of lymph
- ☑ Skin care of the affected areas

WHAT PUTS ME AT GREATER RISK?

- ☑ Higher total dosage of radiation/higher number of radiation treatments
- ☑ Multiple types of treatment (chemo and radiation)
- ☑ Tumor located in the pharynx vs other sites
- ☑ Lymph node dissection

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING YOUR THERAPY APPOINTMENT?

- ☑ Prior to surgery and/or radiation, we will determine your baseline function including neck and shoulder mobility and provide education related to lymphedema. We may provide exercises for you to perform throughout treatment to help you maintain your range of motion.
- ☑ After you have had time to heal from surgery or radiation therapy, we will follow up with you to assess your current function and determine updates to your home exercise program or need for additional therapy

WHAT IS THE LYMPHATIC SYSTEM?

- ☑ Extensive **drainage network**
- ☑ Keeps body **fluid levels in balance**
- ☑ **Defends body** against infections
- ☑ Made up of a collection of lymphatic vessels that carry **lymph**, a clear watery fluid that contains proteins, salts, and other substances.

WHEN SHOULD I SEE A CERTIFIED LYMPHEDEMA THERAPIST?

- ☑ Ideally, patients should be seen before surgery for baseline measurements
- ☑ 4-6 weeks after surgery or as your surgeon allows

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| ☑ Fullness under chin | ☑ Stiffness of neck |
| ☑ Swelling of the face | ☑ Difficulty opening jaw |
| ☑ Difficulty swallowing | ☑ Ear fullness |
| ☑ Raspy or "wet" sounding voice. | ☑ Changes in vision |
| ☑ Needing to clear throat frequently | ☑ Congestion |
| ☑ Firmness of the neck or area of radiated skin | ☑ Thickness of tongue |