

## **The Effect of Complete Decongestive Therapy on Edema Volume Reduction and Quality of Life in Women with Post Breast Surgery Lymph edema**

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### **Abstract**

**Introduction:** upper extremity lymph edema is the most common side effect of breast cancer treatment. Lymph edema may be associated with pain, physical and emotional disorder, impairment of activities of daily living and lower quality of life. The aim of this study was assessment of the effect of Complex Decongestive Therapy on upper extremity lymph edema and quality of life in women with post mastectomy lymph edema.

**Methods:** In this research with before- after design, 36 women with moderate lymph edema after breast surgery participated in the program. Edema volume was measured by water displacement method and quality of life was evaluated by SF-36 questionnaire. Data were recorded before intervention and 2 and 4 weeks after it. Patients received CDT in two intensive and maintenance phases. Each phase lasts 2 weeks. After use of Shapiro Wilk test, another analysis of variances with repeated measurement and t-paired methods were used to analyze the data.

**Results:** After one month performing Complex Decongestive Therapy program, significant decrease of edema was noticed ( $p < 0.0001$ ), quality of life also improved during 2 and 4 weeks after intervention ( $p < 0.0001$ ).

**Conclusion:** This study showed that Complex Decongestive Therapy program is effective in reducing lymph edema volume and improving overall quality of life in women with moderate post breast surgery lymph edema. It seems that increasing patients' awareness and training health practitioners regarding lymph edema controlling methods have important role in earlier and better combating with this complication.

**Keywords:** Breast cancer, Lymph edema, Complex Decongestive Therapy, Quality of life.