

**EFFECTS OF COMPRESSION BANDAGING WITH OR WITHOUT  
MANUAL LYMPH DRAINAGE TREATMENT IN PATIENTS  
WITH POSTOPERATIVE ARM LYMPHEDEMA**

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*ABSTRACT*

*We examined the effects of low stretch compression bandaging (CB) alone or in combination with manual lymph drainage (MLD) in 38 female patients with arm lymphedema after treatment for breast cancer. After CB therapy for 2 weeks (Part I), the patients were allocated to either CB or CB+MLD for 1 week (Part II). Arm volume and subjective assessments of pain, heaviness and tension were measured. The mean lymphedema volume reduction for the total group during Part I was 188 ml ( $p<0.001$ ), a mean reduction of 26% ( $p<0.001$ ). During Part II the volume reduction in the CB+MLD group was 47 ml ( $p<0.001$ ) and in CB group 20 ml. These differences were not significant ( $p=0.07$ ). A percentage reduction of 11% ( $p<0.001$ ) in the CB+MLD group and 4% in the CB group was significantly different ( $p=0.04$ ). In both the CB and the CB+MLD group, a decrease of feeling of heaviness ( $p<0.006$  and  $p<0.001$ , respectively) and tension ( $p<0.001$  for both) in the arm was found, but only the CB+MLD group showed decreased pain ( $p<0.03$ ).*

*Low stretch compression bandaging is an effective treatment giving volume reduction of slight or moderate arm lymphedema in women treated for breast cancer. Manual lymph drainage adds a positive effect.*