

**THE EFFECT OF COMPLETE DECONGESTIVE THERAPY ON THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF PATIENTS WITH PERIPHERAL LYMPHEDEMA****J.M. Weiss, B.J. Spray**

Cox Regional Center for Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation, Springfield, Missouri, USA

**ABSTRACT**

*Lymphedema is a chronic disorder which can adversely affect quality of life (QOL). The purpose of this study was 1) to evaluate whether QOL was improved in patients with lymphedema following Complete Decongestive Therapy (CDT), and 2) whether limb volume change as a result of treatment correlated with change in QOL. Thirty-six patients with peripheral lymphedema from varying causes were enrolled in the study. The QOL of each participant, with regard to physical, functional, and psychosocial concerns, was measured by pre- and post-treatment questionnaires. Percent edema volume reduction was calculated for each patient with only one affected limb. QOL pre- and post-treatment scores were assessed by multivariate repeated measures analysis. QOL scores differed significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) between pre- and post-treatment in all areas of inquiry. Patients with lower extremity lymphedema had significantly greater mean improvement in QOL scores compared with patients with upper extremity lymphedema ( $p = 0.02$ ). There was no correlation between percent edema volume reduction and post-treatment QOL improvement. This study suggests that significant improvements are made in the QOL of patients exhibiting peripheral lymphedema following CDT, which is not necessarily correlated with limb volume reduction.*