**Kathleen Lisson**
Certified Lymphedema Therapist

### Effects of LIPEDEMA

- Reported that lipoedema has had a negative effect on their quality of life: **87%**
- Reported low self esteem: **86%**
- Reported restricted social life: **60%**
- Reported feelings of hopelessness: **47%**
- Reported feelings of self blame: **45%**

*Lipoedema UK’s Big Survey, Fetzer & Fetzer, 2016.*

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### 10 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT LIPEDEMA

**1. What is it?**
Lipoedema is a chronic, progressive and painful fat tissue disorder. You might also see it written as lipoedema or lipedema, as well.

**2. When was it discovered?**
It was first described by Doctors Allen and Hines of the Mayo Clinic in 1963.

**3. When is typical onset?**
46% of women with lipoedema symptoms said their symptoms started in puberty (Fetzer & Fetzer, 2016).  

**4. Where on the body is it noticed?**
Typically, it is seen on the butt, thighs and calves at puberty. It can sometimes affect the arms.

**5. Is there a cure?**
There is no pill or operation that can instantly cure lipoedema. It is a condition that needs to be managed to reduce severity of symptoms.

**6. What are common symptoms?**
- Pain with pressure
- Bruise easily
- Heaviness
- Weakness in legs, fatigue, smooth skin, but 'bean bag' like below skin

**7. Is it hereditary?**
Many people with lipoedema have noticed a familial link, but more research is needed to determine a genetic link.

**8. Are there any other symptoms?**
Hypermobility, frequently cold body temperature, and some report the skin on their legs is a different temperature from the rest of their body.

**9. Is weight loss an effective treatment?**
No. Research has found that there is limited support for the notion that dieting leads to lasting weight loss or health benefits (Mann et al, 2007).

**10. Is it caused by my eating habits?**
No! Having lipoedema is not your fault!

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### Meet Kathryn Lynn Hack
Body Positive Teacher/Artist with Lipedema
BelovedBodies.com

I became a 300 pound woman with a baby and a toddler, as my children grew… so did I.

Ask me how many times I made it to the gym?
Ask me if I ever had a personal trainer.
Ask me how many (expletive) articles I read.
Ask me about my exploring Fat Acceptance and Fat Activism because, I still want and expect to be treated well no matter my size.

Ask me if it felt like to hear my 5 year old crying days after I volunteered in his kindergarten class, saying his peers didn’t like me because I’m fat.

Do you know how I vowed to myself to get my weight under control before my boy started school, for this exact reason?

To my child, this darling boy, I am the sun and the moon. He loves me with the kind of ardent devotion I didn’t know existed in the world.

Can you imagine how it felt to keep my voice even as I said: “All the people who know me, love me. Your best friend likes me. People come in all shapes and sizes and we need to treat everyone with kindness.”

He replied, face in pillow, still crying while his sister slept, “But no one else has a mom as fat as you.”

Having lipoedema feels like my body is more tender than other people’s. It hurts when my small children jump on me with all those corners and elbows. My energy level varies from day to day and I have to plan rest into my schedule.

I treat my lipedema by trying to nourish myself body, mind, and spirit. I find self-care for me means movement, stillness and being connected to community.

The more we move towards fat acceptance, the better adipose tissue disorders will be understood and effective treatment will be more available to people with lipoedema.

- Kathleen Lisson, CLT

### HERE ARE 5 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR WELLBEING

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<th>1. Reduce Pain and Inflammation</th>
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<td>Gentle massage or to tone the sympathetic nervous system which reduces pain while increasing blood flow throughout your body which reduces pain and swelling.</td>
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<th>2. Enhance Self Care Practices</th>
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<td>Improve the amount and quality of your sleep, reduce the amount of stress in your life, meals out for help and support when needed, exercise activities you enjoy, enough, and the time to attend to your emotions.</td>
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<th>3. Make Mobility and Physical Activity Pleasant</th>
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<td>Step planning, “no pain, no gain.” Cut off any excess physical activity to change the shape of your body, don’t harbour or losing in ways that feel joyless. We want to find movement as a normal condition.</td>
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<th>4. Improve Psychosocial Wellbeing</th>
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<td>Send out a therapist to support you with the effects of weight loss, influences your ability to experience stress and emotions when seeing on them, manage your emotional health, and deal with life, and by mediatation.</td>
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<th>5. Intuitive Eating</th>
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<td>Recognize that eating doesn’t work long term to improve your health (and if your size doesn’t determine your health). Build positive relationships and respect your body’s intuition. Practice eating based on internal cues, not external cues. If the words “I’m hungry” are heard, “I’m not hungry” is heard rather than “I’m full” or “I’m hungry,” and how eating for health.</td>
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**How Can We Work Together?**

- Increase awareness of lipoedema and treatment options
- Educate health coaches, dieticians, personal trainers and other healthcare professionals on lipoedema
- Reduce fat stigma among health care professionals, the media and the general public
- Pass the Lipoedema Treatment Act in Congress
- Encourage the depiction of a wider variety of bodies in art
- Make size a federally protected class

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