

***Book Summary***

**Overcoming the Emotional Challenges of Lymphedema** will help you understand the common emotional reactions to lymphedema and improve your coping by using a wide variety of self-help skills and other resources. These skills will help you understand what is going on, change your thinking and your actions, and improve your communications.

This comprehensive handbook includes specific information for people with lymphedema, their friends and families, parents of children with lymphedema, medical professionals and psychotherapists.

***About the author***

**Elizabeth McMahon**, PhD is a clinical psychologist with more than 25 years of experience helping patients, many of whom have chronic medical conditions. She became interested in lymphedema while looking for resources for a family member.

Dr. McMahon received her BA in Psychology from Earlham College and her PhD in Clinical Psychology from Case Western Reserve University. She works in the outpatient psychiatry department of Kaiser Permanente in California where she provides individual and group therapy, supervises psychology residents, helps develop best practice guidelines, and serves on the clinical review and quality assurance committees. She is a coauthor of **Living Well With Lymphedema** (Lymph Notes, 2005).

***Intended Audiences***

**Overcoming the Emotional Challenges of Lymphedema** is self-help book for:

- Those with primary or secondary lymphedema.
- The family and friends who care about people with lymphedema.
- Medical professionals who treat people with lymphedema, even if the treatment they provide is not specific to lymphedema.
- Psychotherapists working with people who have lymphedema.

***From the back cover***

“A phenomenal book, patients as well as professionals will benefit greatly.”

*Saskia Thiadens, RN, Director of the National Lymphedema Network*

“Needed by patients, family members and health professionals.”

*Sheila Ridner, PhD, RN, Lymphedema Researcher*

This book will help you:

- Understand the emotional challenges of lymphedema;
- Overcome these challenges and avoid common pitfalls;
- Recognize problems and know where to go for help;
- Communicate effectively with family, friends, coworkers, and healthcare professionals;
- Set and prioritize your goals;
- Identify where you are in the process of changing;
- Choose specific actions for reaching your goals;
- Monitor your progress and maintain your gains; and
- Learn the ten signs of good coping and six warning signs of ineffective coping.

This comprehensive guide includes specific information for people with lymphedema, their friends and family, parents of children with lymphedema, healthcare professionals, and psychotherapists.

Dr. McMahon is a clinical psychologist with Kaiser Permanente, coauthor of **Living Well With Lymphedema** (Lymph Notes, 2005), and serves on the LymphNotes.com editorial board.

Book shelf categories: Health/Diseases/Lymphedema, Health/Self-Help, Health/Psychology, Cancer Survivors, Medical/Oncology

***Contents in brief***

Section I: Lymphedema Isn't Just Physical

Chapter 1: It All Fits Together

Section II: The Emotional Challenges of Lymphedema

Chapter 2: Feeling Overwhelmed

Chapter 3: Sadness and Grieving

Chapter 4: Anger

Chapter 5: Fear

Chapter 6: Being Self-Protective

Chapter 7: Worry and Uncertainty

Chapter 8: Focusing On Your Body

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Chapter 20: Maintaining Change and Preventing Burnout

Chapter 21: Good Coping and Ineffective Coping

Section VI: Helping People With Lymphedema

Chapter 22: For Family and Friends

Chapter 23: For Parents of Children with Lymphedema

Chapter 24: For Healthcare Professionals

Chapter 25: For Mental Health Professionals

Appendix A: About Lymphedema

***Reviewer comments***

A very encouraging book—like having your own therapist and a close friend along as you try new behaviors.

***Claudia Kelsey***

Empowering and practical, with exercises the reader can jump right into and know they are taking steps to help themselves. I love the emphasis throughout the book that the patient is in control.

***Christine P. Thomas, MSPT, CLT-LANA***

I learned from each part. I'm going to copy a few pages for my employer; I've asked my husband to read the section for him; my therapist wants a copy.

***Pat Speckman***

I found this book immediately comforting. Lymphedema can be isolating but this book helped me feel less alone. ... I believe anyone with lymphedema or their loved ones will benefit from this book.

***Adrienne, recently diagnosed with lymphedema***

A refreshing and inspiring journey through understanding and coping with lymphedema. ... Readers will consult it frequently like a reference tool. Recommended for public libraries, consumer health libraries, and mental health professionals working in oncology.

***Beth Hill, University of Idaho in Library Journal, October 2005***

I think this book is very valuable and a great tool for healthcare professionals and patients alike. I hope it will help strengthen my relationship with my patients and the effectiveness of our work.

***Doris Laing, LMBT, CLT-LANA***

Helping us know how to provide for our own needs and to overcome the emotionally crippling results of lymphedema.

***Karen Kohr-Blinn***

This book is full of basic psychological truths which are insightful, constructive, and very helpful.

***Judith Janaro Fabian, PhD, ABPP***

***Background on lymphedema***

Lymphedema is swelling of tissues due to an accumulation of lymphatic fluid. Lymphedema is a chronic condition that can be disfiguring, painful, disabling and potentially life threatening, especially without proper care.

There are two forms of lymphedema:

- Secondary lymphedema results from impairment of the lymphatic system. This impairment can result from cancer treatment, surgery, radiation, burns, obesity, injury, circulatory disorders, or other causes.
- Primary lymphedema is a hereditary condition. It is also known as Meige disease, Milroy's syndrome, Nonne-Milroy's disease and is related to Turner Syndrome.

For more information see the Appendix A of the book or [www.LymphNotes.com](http://www.LymphNotes.com).

***Incidence of Lymphedema***

An estimated 3-5 million Americans have secondary lymphedema. Studies have shown that 25-40% of breast cancer survivors develop lymphedema within five years post treatment. There are many other causes of secondary lymphedema including obesity, trauma, burns, surgery, lipidema, and circulatory disorders.

Primary lymphedema is hereditary and affects between 50,000 and 1 million Americans. Primary lymphedema may be present from birth or develop later, and frequently appears during adolescence.

***About the Publisher***

Lymph Notes is a new publishing house specializing in quality health information. In addition to print publications, we also run [www.LymphNotes.com](http://www.LymphNotes.com), an online information resource and support community for those with lymphedema, their family and friends, and the healthcare professionals who treat them. The quality of the LymphNotes.com information has been certified by the Health on the Net Foundation (HON Code).