

Arin K. Greene
Sumner A. Slavin
Håkan Brorson
Editors

Lymphedema

Presentation, Diagnosis,
and Treatment

 Springer

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ISBN 978-3-319-14492-4 ISBN 978-3-319-14493-1 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-14493-1

Library of Congress Control Number: 2015933502

Springer Cham Heidelberg New York Dordrecht London
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Printed on acid-free paper

Springer International Publishing AG Switzerland is part of Springer Science+Business Media
(www.springer.com)

This book is dedicated to patients with lymphedema—we hope that it improves their quality of life and translates into improved therapies.

Preface

Although lymphedema affects millions of people around the world, the pathophysiology of the disease is poorly understood and the condition remains incurable. Lymphedema is associated with many myths; patients often are misdiagnosed and receive incorrect treatment. Individuals with lymphedema typically are medical nomads being transferred from physician to physician until they find someone who understands their disease. The goal of this book is to improve the lives of patients with lymphedema by providing an evidence-based resource for health-care providers.

The editors of the book direct Lymphedema Programs and share many principles related to the management of lymphedema. Experts from around the world were recruited to author chapters on his/her expertise. The book was designed to be clinically oriented, rather than focused on history or research; references were limited to no more than 30 for each chapter. The book was written to be an easy-to-read resource that highlights principles by including an abstract, conclusion, and list of key points. The text also can be used for more in-depth study of a subject, teaching, or research. Hopefully, the book will stimulate readers to improve their understanding of lymphedema and to develop better treatments.

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Acknowledgments

The Editors

We thank all of the contributing authors who have shared their expertise to improve the care of patients with lymphedema. We also thank Springer Publishing, and particularly Elektra McDermott, who have done an outstanding job editing and helping us put the book together.

Arin Greene

My interest in lymphedema began when I was exposed to children with primary disease in the Vascular Anomalies Center at Boston Children's Hospital. I was troubled by the significant morbidity that lymphedema could cause, the lack of understanding regarding its pathogenesis, and the often less-than-satisfactory treatments. My passion for the condition was further stimulated by Sumner Slavin who exposed me to patients with secondary lymphedema in the Lymphedema Program at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center.

I would like to thank Sumner Slavin and Håkan Brorson who have been my biggest influences in the field of lymphedema. I am also grateful to Steven Fishman and John Mulliken who not only first exposed me to primary lymphedema but also have encouraged my interest in lymphedema and recommended that patients with primary lymphedema be managed in our dedicated Lymphedema Program rather than the Vascular Anomalies Center. I would like to acknowledge John Meara who has encouraged my interest in lymphedema and given me tremendous professional support. Dr. Meara also supported moving the Lymphedema Program from the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center to the Department of Plastic and Oral Surgery at Boston Children's Hospital. Since relocating the center to our department several years ago, we have been able to manage both children and adults with the disease. In addition, we have learned from our high volume of patients, which has translated into innovation and improved care.

Our multidisciplinary management of patients with lymphedema would not be possible without the work of Jennifer Jagielski and Susan Rajotte who attend our Lymphedema Clinics and provide static and pneumatic compression, respectively. I am grateful for our other team members, Elizabeth Hunter, Ashley D'Eon, and Reid Maclellan, who provide outstanding patient care and administration. I would like to thank our close colleagues in the

Nuclear Medicine Department, Frederick Grant and Stephan Voss, who perform lymphoscintigraphy on our patients and collaborate with us through research as well.

Finally, I want to acknowledge my family. I am not sure I would be a plastic surgeon today without my grandparents, Albert and Ruth, who had a profound influence on my life. Most importantly, I want to thank my wife, Sarah, and three boys, Albert, Mac, and Henry, who encourage and support the passion I have for my “job.”

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