A phenomenological study of the lived experiences of people with lymphoedema.

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Lymphoedema occurs in all age groups and is caused by lymphatic insufficiency. It is associated with a wide range of cancer- and non-cancer-related conditions. Researchers have explored the impact of lymphoedema on quality of life but most studies have focused on breast cancer-related lymphoedema or used specific quality of life tools. The study reported here used a phenomenological approach to explore the lived experience of 15 individuals with different types of lymphoedema. Findings highlight the uncertainty surrounding their diagnosis, the difficulties they experienced in accessing appropriate treatment and ways in which they dealt with having lymphoedema. Recommendations are made highlighting the need for increased awareness of lymphoedema and the importance of wider consideration of the emotional and psychosocial dimensions of this chronic condition.

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