

## **Precautions Following Removal of Lymph Nodes**

These precautions are presented to you to help prevent any complications that might result from having some of the lymph nodes removed from under your arm. We suggest you follow these precautions for the rest of your life. Lymphedema can occur immediately postoperative, within a few months, or even a couple of years or longer after cancer therapy. With proper education and care, lymphedema can be avoided.

Use your arm as normally as possible.

Maintain normal body weight and avoid weight gain.

Use sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15 on the arm.

Keep the skin well-conditioned by using moisturizing lotion.

Have blood tests and injections done on the opposite arm.

Avoid binding or constricting the arm. Have blood pressure taken on the opposite arm.

Avoid vigorous repetitive movements against resistance with the affected arm.

Use insect repellent when exposed to biting or stinging insects.

Wash all cuts or breaks in the skin well, apply an antibacterial agent (Neosporin) until it has healed.

Use gloves when gardening, oven mitt when cooking and rubber gloves when using any chemical cleaners.

### **When to call the doctor:**

Localized redness

New or sudden swelling in the arm, hand, fingers or chest wall

Localized increase in the temperature of the skin