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Newsletter

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**300 Clinchfield St. Suite 320 Kingsport, TN 37660**

## March is Lymphedema Awareness Month

We want to help your patients dealing with chronic lymphedema whether it is related to a cancer diagnosis, a defect in the lymphatic system, or related to chronic venous insufficiency. We employ 3 certified lymphedema therapists with 135 hours of specific training in lymphedema treatment. Patients affected by lymphedema have a much better outcome if treated early in the lymphedema disease process. Refer to us sooner rather than later.

What does lymphedema treatment consist of? Complete Decongestive Therapy (CDT) is the gold standard for lymphedema treatment. It consists of 4 main components.

- 1) Compression therapy
- 2) Manual lymphatic drainage
- 3) Decongestive exercises
- 4) Instruction in proper skin and nail care

### Lymphedema Surveillance Programs

Let us help you monitor your patients for early signs and symptoms of lymphedema.

Breast cancer survivors, head and neck cancer survivors, and melanoma survivors are frequently at risk for developing lymphedema if the survivor has had lymph nodes removed or radiated. At Ribbons Physical Therapy, we take base line measurement of the at risk area. This allows us to note small changes in the area that are many times not visually noted. Comparing previous measurements as well as monitoring the consistency of the tissue in the at risk area allows for early detection of lymphedema. These patients are followed every 3 months or more frequently if indicated for 1 year. Initiating treatment early can mean the difference of utilizing a compression garment all the time versus utilizing a compression garment on an as needed basis. Only having to use a compression garment on an as needed basis allows the patient to have a higher quality of life.

An infographic titled "6 THINGS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT LYMPHEDEMA" featuring a central illustration of a human figure with the lymphatic system highlighted in green. The infographic includes six numbered facts and a list of causes of lymphatic dysfunction.

**6 THINGS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT LYMPHEDEMA**

- 1** Lymphedema is chronic swelling caused by a build-up of fluid that occurs when the lymphatic system is either faulty or damaged.
- 2** An estimated 3-5 million Americans suffer from lymphedema — including many that are undiagnosed or undertreated. That is more than ALS, Cystic Fibrosis, Multiple Sclerosis, Muscular Dystrophy, and Parkinson's Disease combined.
- 3** Most physicians in the United States are taught about the lymphatic system for 1 hour or less during their 4 years of medical school training.
- 4** There is no known cure for lymphedema, but it can be effectively treated. Compression therapy is the most critical component of treatment. Without it, patients are at increased risk for complications and disability.
- 5** Medicare, and many private insurance policies do NOT cover compression garments, wraps, or bandages — the supplies needed for compression therapy.
- 6** The Lymphedema Treatment Act is a bill, currently in Congress, that aims to improve insurance coverage for compression supplies, allowing lymphedema patients to maintain a healthy and productive life.

**Causes of Lymphatic Dysfunction**

- A. Lymph node removal for cancer treatment
- B. Injury to lymphatic vessels due to trauma or infection
- C. Venous insufficiency, causing overload of lymphatic vessels
- D. Congenital malformation of lymphatics

**Swollen tissue due to buildup of lymphatic fluid**

**2 out of 5 breast cancer patients will develop lymphedema within 5 years of surgery.**

**LYMPHEDEMA TREATMENT ACT**

Visit our website to learn more about lymphedema and how to support this bill.  
[LymphedemaTreatmentAct.org](http://LymphedemaTreatmentAct.org)

\*Journal of Clinical Oncology -- JCO Oncol 2010 Jan 20;27(3):380-2.

# Ribbons PT welcomes Delona Wampler!

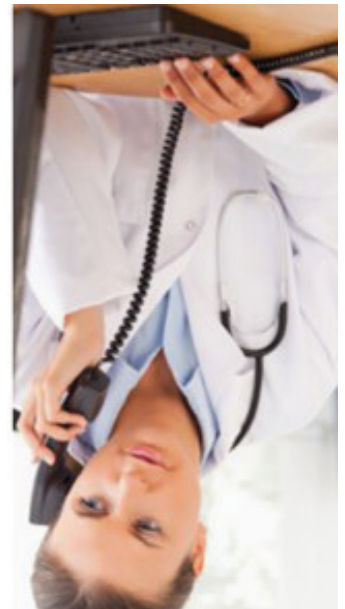
We are excited to have Delona join our growing office staff. Delona arrives at Ribbons PT with 16 years experience in an outpatient Physical Therapy clinic setting. She resides in Kingsport with her husband Mark and 4 furbabies and loves doing florals, crafting and spending time with her grandbabies in her spare time. Delona's experience in all aspects of managing a multilocation PT organization has already provided tremendous wisdom to our relatively new business. We are so grateful to have her join our family.



## RIBBONS PHYSICAL THERAPY, LLC.

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Ribbons Physical Therapy has been provided a portal to EPIC! We are now able to access PT/OT/Lymphedema clinic orders dropped into EPIC as long as we are provided via fax/phone the patient name and DOB along with Epic MR#. If you are a Ballad Health provider, this will ease the referral process, eliminating printing and faxing needed information. For non-Ballad facilities we can use your standard referral form or we can provide you with ours. All we need to start your patient intake is an order along with standard patient demographics (i.e. patient name, DOB, contact and insurance information). Our fax number is (423)251-4743.



## EPIC access for Ballad Health facilities