



Breast Cancer Action Newsletter March 2021

I do hope that you are all doing well. Remember, our Peer Support volunteers are to help. These are tough times, and still living during the time of COVID, one year later, I find that so many of us are simply exhausted. Please reach out to me via email or by phone at 613-736-5921.

Over the next few weeks, I will be finishing up the 2020 Annual Report. We will also be assessing satisfaction rates amongst our health and wellness program participants with the goal of launching Session 2 for the months of April, May, and June,

March is about lymphedema!

During the month of March, in order to help raise awareness about lymphedema, the National Lymphedema Network (NLN) has planned an entire month of education sessions intended for the patient community.

These free talks can be accessed by registering through the NLN website:
<https://lymphnet.org/lymphedema-awareness>



Did you know that there are often symptoms before you ever see any signs of swelling? Signs and symptoms to pay attention to:

- NEW feelings of heaviness, aching, fullness, and tingling.
- Visible swelling.
- No longer to see veins, tendons, and skin wrinkles.
- Rings and/or clothing fitting more tightly than usual.
- Skin feeling thicker (fibrosis).
- Pitting edema.

These symptoms may come and go at the beginning but will progress over time.

Did you know that the sooner you have your lymphedema treated, the simpler it is to treat?

If you develop any of these symptoms, please reach out to BCA Ottawa (i.e., Certified in Complete Decongestive Therapy – CDT) for a list of local Lymphedema Therapy providers.



We are launching a monthly lymphedema support group created for and by people with lymphedema. We come together to share information, hope, fears, successes, and hardships in a safe space to co-create support and growth. We are all responsible for the comfort of the group!

While we are launching this for March 6th, 2021 in honor of World Lymphedema Day, this monthly event will be during the week going forward, facilitated by volunteer member lymphedema therapists from across Ontario.

Facilitators are here to guide and support the group. Use positive language.

Guiding principles:

- We are based on self-help and mutual support.
- We believe in learning from each other.
- We believe in positivity and being non-judgmental.
- We believe in all voices being heard.

What makes online groups good?

1. Feel welcome!
2. Respected
3. What they are saying matters

Number per group:

24 people - First come first serve, must register to attend.

Goal- Everyone gives and gets support!

Opening the group:

1. Introduce facilitators.
2. Explain mute/unmute.
3. Explain using chat features and raise hand to talk.
4. Start with an icebreaker (tell us where you are from and where your lymphedema is)

Agenda to follow!

More information and online registration: [LAO Pilot Virtual Support Group](#)

REGISTER NOW

With March comes hints of Spring and a little more sunshine. I hope it brings happiness to each one of you 😊