

L-Dex Assessment for Lymphedema

The Lymphedema Index (L-Dex) is a measurement system that helps assess for lymphedema of the arm or leg.

Why should a patient have an L-Dex measurement?

Lymphedema can occur any time following cancer treatment. Most occurs within the first two years following surgery, but it can develop as late as 10 years following cancer treatment. Early detection of lymphedema is critical to aid in successful treatment and reversal of the condition. L-Dex measurements are a non-invasive and sensitive method to aid in the assessment and early detection of lymphedema of the limb.

L-Dex measurements taken at regular intervals can help your physician:

- Establish a baseline for what is "normal" for you
- Assess the early stages of lymphedema
- Show you how treatment or management is progressing
- Give you peace of mind

How is L-Dex measured?

L-Dex measurements are made by passing a harmless electrical signal of exceptionally low strength through your body. Both arms, or both legs will be measured during the process.

How does the L-Dex system work?

The electrical signal travels through the fluid surrounding the cells which make up the muscle and tissues of the limb. The amount of this fluid increases as lymphedema develops. Increased fluid means the electrical signal will travel more easily through the limb.

The L-Dex system compares how easily the electrical signal travels in the unaffected and affected (or at-risk) limbs and generates an L-Dex value from this comparison.

What does an L-Dex value mean?

The L-Dex value indicates the difference in the amount of fluid in the unaffected and affected limbs. Changes in these values over time can indicate if lymphedema is developing.

How does the L-Dex assessment help a patient?

The L-Dex system is best used as a series of measurements over time. This aids the health care professional to:

- Assess early stages of lymphedema in patients at risk of developing the condition and therefore start therapy as soon as possible.
- Accurately assess the effectiveness of therapy for those who already have lymphedema- L-Dex values indicative of lymphedema should decrease as a result of effective therapy.

Reference: Ridner, S.H., et al., A Randomized Trial Evaluating Bioimpedance Spectroscopy Versus Tape Measurement for the Prevention of Lymphedema Following Treatment for Breast Cancer: Interim Analysis. Ann Surg Oncol, 2019.