

# Safe Lymphatic (Fan) Taping: Patient Guide

For people living with lymphedema — use as an adjunct to compression and  
Complete Decongestive Therapy (CDT).

## When NOT to use tape

- Do not apply over broken, irritated, or infected skin (including cellulitis)
- Avoid on areas with active rash, open wounds, or radiation dermatitis
- Do not use if you suspect a DVT or have unexplained pain/swelling — seek medical care
- Use caution if you have very fragile/tear-prone skin or known adhesive allergies

## Before you start

- Wash and dry skin thoroughly; avoid lotions where tape will sit
- If you have sensitive skin, perform a small patch test for 24 hours
- Trim hair if needed (do not shave immediately before taping)

## How to apply a basic lymphatic 'fan'

- Cut a strip 6–10 inches long; round the corners
- Create 3–5 tails by cutting lengthwise, leaving a 1–2 inch anchor uncut
- Anchor PROXIMAL (toward the lymph nodes you want to drain to) with NO tension
- Lay the tails DISTAL→PROXIMAL along natural drainage lines with 0–20% stretch
- Smooth each tail to activate adhesive

## Wear & removal

- Typical wear time: 3–5 days if skin tolerates it; replace sooner if edges lift or irritation appears
- Shower is okay; pat dry — avoid hot blow-dryers on tape
- To remove: soak with oil or warm water and peel low-and-slow while supporting the skin

## Good to know

- Taping does NOT replace compression sleeves/wraps or CDT — it's an optional add-on
- Stop and contact your clinician if you notice itching, rash, blistering, or pain under the tape
- Your CLT can map safe directions and show you where taping may help most