

TRANSCRIPT OF MEDIA-Vibration plates show promise for people with lymphedema

OSF expert says more research is needed

Rachel Rohman-Physical Therapist, OSF HealthCare

While early research is encouraging, Rohman says evidence specific to lymphedema remains limited.

“There has been a lot of positive research regarding, especially improvements in circulation, improved venous vasodilation and getting the blood moving,” Rohman says. “While the circulatory system and the lymph system go hand in hand, there's not as much research looking directly at people with lymphedema and use of vibration plates.” (:22)

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Rohman explains, “Those women do get some swelling and that study did show some positive improvements in swelling over time with use of vibration plates in addition to manual lymphatic drainage massage. So, the new studies are showing some promise. I think there will be a lot more promising research that comes out, even potentially in the next few years.” (:20)

Rohman says she discusses the devices primarily with patients who are already following established treatment recommendations and are looking for additional ways to manage symptoms.

“They are already potentially doing their other treatment options that are more standard of care, but they're just looking to take their treatment to the next level and so I’m telling them that is an additional option they can try that does have some promising research,” Rohman shares. (:15)

Still, Rohman cautions that the devices are not appropriate for everyone.

“I am looking for a patient that does not have any medical contraindications,” Rohman says. “They don't have any uncontrolled medical conditions that would warrant being seen by a specialist. Someone with an implanted device like a pacemaker, that can cause some harm to the device, which could be life-threatening.” (:22)