



*“If left untreated, Lipedema can lead to other serious conditions.”*

## Is It Body Fat or Something Else?

Let's face it! We silently curse the dimpled cellulite that has settled on our thighs, the extra weight that just seems to creep up as we get older. But not everyone stores fat the same way. There is a disease where fat accumulates abnormally in arms and legs that can actually harm your health.

Lipedema is a hereditary disease that is often mistaken for obesity and occurs mostly in the female population. It is a condition that affects the fatty tissue in the legs and sometimes the arms. Lipedema does not usually respond to regular diet and exercise and can occur in all sizes of people.

Symptoms of Lipedema include legs that look like columns and have larger lower halves. Additionally, they are often tender and may bruise easily.

Dr Wright understands this painful disease and is creating the awareness that there is hope! He is one of the very few vein specialists to be able to diagnose Lipedema and then skillfully and effectively treat the disease. He will actually be a featured speaker at an upcoming conference on Lipedema at the Fat Disorders Research Society Conference, April 8th and 9th at the St. Louis Marriot Hotel.

**LIPEDEMA TREATMENTS**

Treatment can include manual lymphatic drainage using massage technique movements to stimulate the flow of lymph fluids in the blocked areas returning them back to healthy vessels. This therapy can also include using compression garments to increase the pressure in the swollen areas and reduce fluid build-up. Certain exercises can also help to reduce this fluid mobility and boost mobility. Finally, liposuction techniques such as water assisted procedures can help remove lipedema fat.

**THERE ARE SEVERAL WAYS TO HELP FIGHT THE APPEARANCE OF LIPEDEMA**

- *Maintain a healthy diet* – This is a crucial step in managing lipedema. While lipedema is not very responsive to weight loss, unfortunately weight gain can make it worse. In a way the lipedema fat traps excess calories but won't release them when weight loss occurs. The diet should eliminate sugars, fast foods, processed foods, unhealthy oils and other such foods. It is crucial to at least maintain a calorie balance to avoid weight gain that will worsen lipedema.
- *Exercise is important* – It is important to exercise to keep the lipedema under control. Patients should especially exercise the legs. Some of the best exercises are walking, cycling, and swimming. Exercise not only maintains muscle mass but also stimulates the lymphatic circulation which help control lipedema symptoms.
- *Manual lymph drainage* – This should be undertaken once or twice a week and has been shown to be very effective in battling lipedema. A special massage technique essentially opens the lymphatic vessels to allow natural drainage of the fluids. This is often combined with brushing and wraps.
- *Wear compression garments* – Wearing compression garments is important, especially in combination with lymph drainage massage. Compression garments promote venous and lymphatic drainage and help prevent swelling. Earlier stages of lipedema often only require lower degrees of compression.
- *Supplements and medications* – There are several nutritional medications and supplements that have been shown to be helpful for the symptoms of lipedema, these include Diosmin, which is an extract of citrus fruit. There are also several medications doctors can prescribe which can help control the pain and swelling of lipedema.

It is very important that a correct diagnosis is made so the proper course of treatment can be implemented. If left untreated, Lipedema can lead to other serious conditions.

If you are concerned about Lipedema or would like to know more about this debilitating disease, please contact Laser, Lipo and Vein Center and they will help you find the best treatment options to help you live a better life. Dr Wright and his experienced team of professionals can diagnose and provide you with the best treatment option for you.



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**MEET**

**Thomas Wright M.D., F.A.C.P., R.V.T**

Thomas Wright M.D., F.A.C.P., R.V.T, is the medical director of Laser Lipo and Vein Center and the leading vein doctor and liposuction specialist in St. Louis. He is one of the first two-hundred-plus surgeons in the nation to become diplomates in Phlebology by the American Board of Phlebology (aka a vein doctor and vein disease expert). Phlebology is the specialty that treats the totality of venous disease. Dr Wright was voted by his peers as one of St Louis Magazine TOP DOCS in 2009. He has authored and presented several scientific papers on new surgical techniques for the treatment of venous insufficiency. He has received numerous honors including Election to the Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society, the AMA Physician Recognition Award and appointment as a Howard Hughes Research Fellow.

Dr. Wright has been awarded the Patients' Choice Award in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013, and the Compassionate Doctor Award in those same years. In 2012, he won honors from the American College of Phlebology for his original research. In 2013, HealthTap gave Dr. Wright the Top Doctor Award and named him Top Phlebologist (aka Top Vein Doctor). He is a Fellow of the American College of Physicians and is an instructor and faculty advisor for the American Society of Nonsurgical Aesthetics. He is a member and contributor of original research to the American College of Phlebology and a Fellow of the American Society of Laser Medicine and Surgery as well as a member of the American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery. Dr Wright is a certified medical sonographer credentialed by American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonography. Dr. Wright is also a true liposuction specialist, proving artistic body sculpting using safe liposuction techniques like Tumescent Liposuction. His research and areas of special interest include venous health, minimally invasive body sculpting techniques and vein treatments.