

Mayo Clinic Minute

Lymphedema risk: It's not just about the surgery

Video	Audio
Vivien Williams	When breast cancer patients face surgery to remove the cancer and associated lymph nodes, many worry about the risk of lymphedema.
Vivien Williams	A study by Dr. Judy Boughey and colleagues shows surgery is not the only treatment that puts patients at risk of lymphedema. Radiation and chemotherapy may be culprits, too.
Judy Boughey, M.D. Surgery Mayo Clinic	What this tells us is that lymphedema is an important aspect that patients need to discuss, not only with their surgeons, but also with their radiation therapist and also with their medical oncologist.”
Vivien Williams	If a patient does develop lymphedema, addressing it early is key, because there are treatments that can help.
Judy Boughey, M.D. Surgery Mayo Clinic	“We, nowadays, have many more opportunities to treat lymphedema than what we had 10 years ago and even five years ago. There are procedures that can be done to reconnect the lymphatics to different veins to get them to drain. We can do lymph node transfers, all kinds of procedures.”
Judy Boughey, M.D.	“And, so, early recognition, early treatment, early intervention, I think, is critical to try to make this collateral damage as minimally impactful on the patient as possible.”
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Vivien Williams.