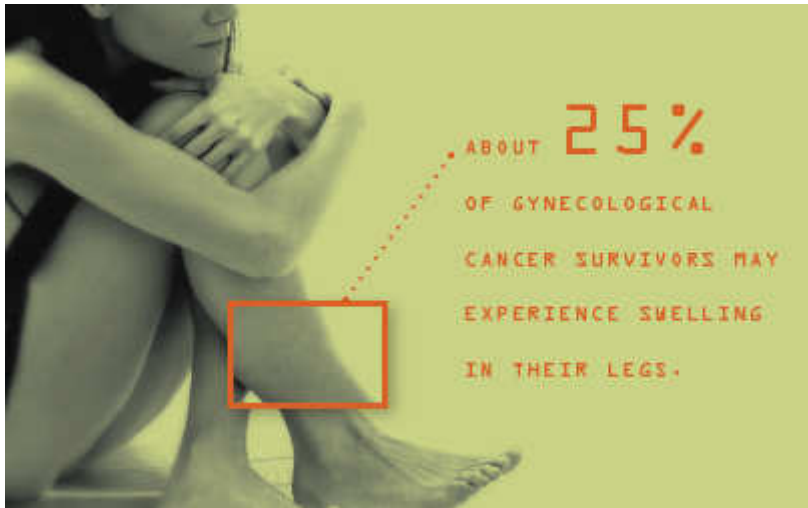


BODY / SNIPPETS

Lymphedema Watch



Gynecological cancer survivors should be on the lookout for swelling or pain in the legs, which would mean they are suffering from lymphedema.

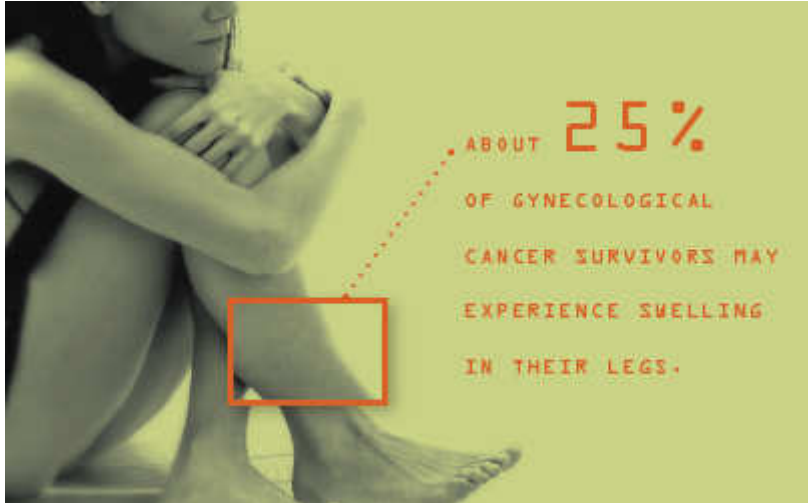
Many breast cancer survivors are familiar with the post surgical arm swelling called lymphedema, a chronic condition likely caused by excess lymphatic fluid in the limb following lymph node dissection or removal. Less well-known is that about 25 percent of gynecological cancer survivors may experience swelling in their legs, according to a new survey, although more than half of sufferers failed to receive a clinical diagnosis of lymphedema.

- > **The most common triggers** are standing all day, hot weather and long-distance travel.
- > **The risks were greatest** for vulvar cancer survivors, anyone who had lymph node dissection, cervical cancer survivors who had radiation therapy, and overweight or obese uterine and ovarian cancer survivors.
- > **Lymphedema symptoms**, which can vary greatly from case to case, include swelling, tight skin and pain. The condition is chronic but treatable with compression garments, lymphatic massage and lymphatic exercises.

The authors of the survey of 802 gynecological cancer survivors in Queensland, Australia, urge care providers to give patients information about lymphedema before surgery as well as ongoing access to supportive care.

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CANCER, 6/15/07

Source: Heal Magazine Vol.1. No. 2/Fall 2007
