

VGH/UBC Lymphedema Program:

Mandate – Assessment and Management of British Columbians with primary or secondary Lymphedema.

Dr. Elliott Weiss has been caring for and advocating on behalf of individuals with Lymphedema in British Columbia for decades. Over the past 10 years, he recognized the potential for enhanced surgical management of these patients, as reports of successful reconstruction were published. The Division of Plastic Surgery at UBC also observed this gap in patient care and supported a sabbatical for Dr. Erin Brown to travel to Japan, Korea and Taiwan to receive exposure to the world leaders in Lymphedema reconstruction. Together with Dr. Kathryn Isaac, the 'Patricia Clouston' Chair in Breast Reconstructive Surgery, Drs Elliott and Brown form the physician leads for the Provincial Lymphedema Program. We look forward to expanding our program to continue to improve the care we deliver. For example, Dr. Moira Stilwell has redesigned the technique for lymphoscintigraphy which has dramatically improved our ability to map out lymphatic flow and function.

Our approach to patient care has been comprehensive assessment, with the goal to provide the most accurate diagnosis and staging, maximize conservative management and determine if surgical treatment may be beneficial. Both lymphaticovenous anastomosis (LVA) and vascularized lymph node transfers (VLNT) will be offered to appropriate patients, along with other interventions, such as liposuction and skin resection. The exact nature of treatment will be guided by the assessment of each patient and the best available evidence to support the most effective interventions. We will be gathering detailed information about all patients to ensure that our evaluations and treatments provide the highest level of care, and continue to improve over time.

Referrals from across the province can be made through your GP to Dr. Brown's office.

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