



New Lymphedema Support Group to Meet at L&C

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GODFREY - Lewis and Clark Community College is encouraging those suffering from lymphedema to join a new support group, which will meet for the first time at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 25 in the Templin Nursing Building Conference Room on L&C's Godfrey campus.

The Lymphedema Support Group will meet monthly. Lymphedema, an illness that is becoming more common in the United States, is a condition that is commonly seen as an accumulation of lymphatic fluid in an area of the body.

"Participants in the Lymphedema Support Group will not only learn more about the causes and current treatments for lymphedema but will also meet and share with others who are facing similar situations," said Barbara L. Van Walleghen, a registered nurse at the Lewis and Clark Family Health Clinic. "Resources from suppliers of garments, shoes and therapy will provide information, and grassroots political efforts to raise awareness about lymphedema will also be part of the support group."

There are two forms of lymphedema, primary and secondary. Primary lymphedema occurs usually as a birth defect and develops when a patient is in their infancy or during their childhood years. During primary lymphedema, the patient's lymphatic system does not form properly.

Secondary Lymphedema is commonly seen in patients who have had a traumatic injury, who have been infected by a parasite, have been treated for breast cancer, or in patients who have been treated for testicular cancer.

When a patient's lymphatic system is not functioning properly, then a buildup of lymphatic fluid forms in an affected area. This lymphatic fluid causes the affected limb to feel extremely heavy and the limb itself will become larger in circumference.

Those wanting more information can call (618) 468-6800 or visit www.lc.edu/fhc.