

Fast Facts

Edema

- Swelling caused by excess fluid being trapped in your body's tissues
- Can appear in any part of your body, but is more often noticed in the arms/hands and legs/feet (peripheral edema)
- Result of the tiny blood vessels in your body (capillaries) leaking fluid causing it to build up in surrounding tissue resulting in swelling
 - Level can range from mild to severe
- Mild cases are usually the result of sitting/staying in one position too long, eating too much salty food, having premenstrual symptoms, or being pregnant
 - Can also be a side effect of medications
- Severe cases are usually caused by underlying medical conditions and typically develop over time

<i>Symptoms</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Prevention</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Swelling -Stretched/shiny skin -Skin that pits after being pressed for several seconds <p><i>Ascites</i> (fluid is collecting in the abdominal cavity):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increased abdominal size <p><i>Pulmonary Edema</i> (fluid is building up in the lungs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Shortness of breath -Difficulty breathing -Chest pain 	<p><i>Mild:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Elevate legs to the level of the heart or higher -Change medications <p><i>Severe:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Manage any underlying conditions -Take medications to help get rid of the excess fluid (diuretics) <p><i>Ascites:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Have fluid drained (paracentesis) -Address underlying cause <p><i>Pulmonary Edema:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Mange in hospital with intravenous (IV) medications and breathing support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increase activity level (with doctor's approval) -Gently massage the area -Reduce salt intake -Wear compression stockings or sleeves once swelling has gone down (designed to prevent swelling by keeping pressure on the limbs, so if used before the swelling has subsided, they could restrict blood flow) 	<p>Live a Healthy Lifestyle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Eat a healthy diet that is high in fruits, vegetables, lean meats/proteins, and whole grains while limiting fats, excessive sugar, and reducing salt -Be as active as possible and exercise several times a week -Reduce stress -Get plenty of rest -Don't smoke or use illegal drugs -Drink alcohol only in moderation

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