

EVE'S STORY

With Frances Furlong



Eve modelling with her medical stocking on show

I am a 34 year old female who has been living with a medical condition known as Primary Lymphedema for 13 years. It is caused by alterations (mutations) in genes responsible for the development of the lymphatic system. The "faulty" genes cause the parts of the lymphatic system responsible for draining fluid to not develop properly or not work as they should. In my case, my lymphatic system in my left leg is affected, which causes it to swell. The condition is not life threatening, but it is unfortunately incurable.

Lymphedema is thought to affect more than 200,000 people in the UK. Primary Lymphedema is rare and is thought to affect 1 in every 6,000 people.

When I was first diagnosed my affected leg was double the size of my unaffected right leg. I have spent the best part of the last ten years managing my condition effectively, such as maintaining a healthy weight, regularly exercising, eating a good balanced diet and ensuring I wear my leg support garment every day. As a result, today my condition is much improved; however there is still an apparent difference in size. Nonetheless, when I was first diagnosed I immediately lost my self-identity and confidence, became very depressed and felt that because of my diagnosis I could no longer be the stylish, unique looking young woman I once was. Overtime, I restored my self-belief and I am happy to say I am positively living with my condition.

I live a totally normal life, I work and I am a Mum to a two year old boy. Being pregnant

and having lymphedema was a big challenge and you just have to expect that your affected limbs are going to swell up. I had to make sure I rested where possible. My advice would be if you are planning a pregnancy try and plan it so you reach your last trimester in the winter months. Wear your support garments every day, try to eat as healthy as you can I know this can be very difficult through pregnancy as most of my pregnancy I wanted to eat everything in sight. Drink lots of water and try and exercise, I found swimming the best form of exercise and pregnancy yoga as yoga works in three ways to increase the flow of lymph and relieve lymphatic congestion.

Primary Lymphedema is rare and therefore there is still I think little public knowledge about the condition. I would like to inspire others living with the condition and I will hopefully be starting my blog primarily aimed at women and young girls who have lost self-confidence, particularly in their appearance. I want to show that despite the change in body shape this does not need to affect your body image and self-esteem in a negative way. I have found various ways to wear clothes on trend and I would like to share this with people. The blog would also contain information on how to effectively manage the condition, from my experience and motivational videos to support people who have recently been diagnosed. I want the blog to be current to women, instead of a conventional medical blog which solely talks about the condition. ■

Follow Eve's blog on instagram - [@e.v.nichol](#)



This month I have chosen to hand over my page to one of my clients to raise awareness, help and support to those suffering with lymphedema. Eve is an inspirational young lady who does not let her condition define her, or limit her ability to achieve her dreams. As a busy working mother, she juggles work and home life as well as managing a health condition which there is no cure for. But through hard work, following medical advice and staying positive she manages wonderfully.



THE DETAILS

Please call Michelle on 07508 404862 for further information. info@perfect-skin.co.uk www.perfect-skin.co.uk