

# VERN'S STORY

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“The Flexitouch system has allowed me to continue, without hesitation, what I have done all my life.”

## LIVING LIFE TO THE FULLEST

When Vern was diagnosed with lymphedema in 2005, he wasn't about to let it interrupt his outdoor sporting activities or his traveling sales career. When his best efforts to control the swelling in his leg failed, Vern began to wonder how much it was going to change his quality of life. Then, he heard about the Flexitouch® system. After using the Flexitouch system routinely at home and on the road, he became confident that he could control his lymphedema, enjoy his active lifestyle, and maintain his positive outlook.

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Vern noticed swelling in his right leg one afternoon after his daily jog. At fifty-seven, he was the pillar of health—trim, active, and in tune with his body. So, when the swelling did not go away, Vern visited his family doctor, who recognized the symptoms of lymphedema and referred Vern to a vascular specialist. The specialist confirmed what Vern already suspected—that the massive amount of radiation he had received thirty-seven years prior to treat testicular cancer had caused his lymphedema.

Vern received in-clinic therapy and was trained in bandaging, self-manual lymphatic drainage (MLD), and decongestive exercise. In addition, he began to wear a thigh-high compression stocking during the day and a special compressive garment designed for overnight use. Even with his diligent efforts, the swelling in his leg worsened, causing hardening (fibrosis) and reduced strength and endurance. For all of the effort he put into treating his lymphedema, he thought the results were “unbelievably disappointing.”

Eventually, it became harder to maintain a professional appearance for work. Vern had a difficult time finding appropriate shoes, as his right foot was larger than his left, and he needed special clothing to accommodate the size of his calf and thigh. His business travel, which routinely required long road trips, was increasingly uncomfortable, as the swelling worsened when he was driving. On the road, he found it difficult to launder and re-roll the bandages for compression bandaging. In addition, the compression garment he wore at night made him too hot and interfered with his sleep.

Finally, Vern traveled to a renowned hospital's lymphedema department, where he learned his options were limited. He could not commit to the recommended additional round of daily Complete Decongestive Therapy (CDT), due to the demands of his business travel. Taking Vern's clinical status, lifestyle and concerns into account, the physician told him about a product to treat lymphedema that could be used at home or on the road — the Flexitouch system.

## A NEW STRATEGY

Vern became the first patient at his local hospital to receive a product demonstration with the Flexitouch system. After his first Flexitouch treatment, he noticed immediate softening of his leg and ankle. Vern and his therapist thought the Flexitouch may be a good long-term option for him. His doctor agreed. Vern was surprised at how smooth the process was to obtain the Flexitouch system. Tactile Systems Technology submitted the paperwork to his insurance company and in fewer than three weeks the device was approved and received at his home. After one month of using the Flexitouch twice a day for hour-long treatments, coupled with daily compression garment wear, Vern experienced a twenty-seven percent reduction in the volume of his right leg.<sup>1</sup>

Now, more than a year later, Vern faithfully uses the Flexitouch system at home and on the road. He never travels without it in his carry-on bag. He has reduced his Flexitouch treatment to a single 90-minute session daily, approximately five days a week. He manages his lymphedema independently and has not needed any further in-clinic therapy. He reports that his skin is healthier, and the fibrosis in his leg has improved greatly.

Vern's ongoing positive attitude and determination have paid off. In the first six months of 2009 alone, Vern played golf in eleven different states. He plays, on average up to 900 holes of golf each year and even finds time to go hunting. He has continued his dedication to his career.

Vern says, "Prior to using Flexitouch, my uncontrolled lymphedema couldn't be tolerated. The Flexitouch has allowed me to continue, without hesitation, what I have done all my life. I don't have to modify my lifestyle. Anybody with lymphedema should look into the Flexitouch system."

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1) Individual results will vary.



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