

Things to Avoid (Bandaging Phase, Lymphedema)



During CDT Left Arm

Bandage Protection

- Do not get bandages wet (avoid showers without a cover, swimming, or soaking).
- Do not remove or re-wrap bandages on your own unless instructed by your therapist.
- Do not apply creams or oils under the bandage unless approved.
- Do not cut, fold, or alter bandages to “make them more comfortable.”

Excessive Pressure & Restriction

- Do not use blood pressure cuffs, injections, or blood draws on the affected arm.
- Avoid carrying heavy bags, groceries, or purses with the bandaged arm.
- Avoid leaning or resting body weight on the bandaged arm.
- Do not wear tight clothing, jewelry, or straps that dig into the bandaged arm/shoulder.

Heat Exposure

- Avoid hot tubs, saunas, heating pads, or sunburn on the bandaged arm.
- Do not sit in direct sunlight for long periods (bandages trap heat).

Movement & Activity

- Avoid strenuous or repetitive movements (heavy lifting, scrubbing, or pulling).
- Do not keep the arm hanging down for long (elevate when resting).
- Avoid sleeping directly on the bandaged arm.

Skin & Infection Risks

- Do not scratch under the bandage (this can injure the skin).
- Avoid pet scratches, gardening without gloves, or anything that risks cuts.
- Do not ignore signs of infection (increased redness, heat, pain, fever → call your provider).

Lifestyle

- Avoid salty foods and alcohol, which increase swelling.
- Avoid smoking—it slows healing.

- Do not skip daily exercise/walking as guided by your therapist (gentle movement helps the bandages work).

Key Reminder:

The bandages are designed to provide **consistent, safe pressure** to help move lymph. The danger comes from **uncontrolled pressure**—like heavy lifting, tight clothing, or leaning your body weight on the arm.