

"Hi, I noticed you staring at my legs and my feet before. I just want to let you know that I have a condition called Lymphoedema. Perhaps you'd like to google it later. I feel uncomfortable when you stare and laugh, I'm sure others would feel the same. So if you could just not do it, that'd be much appreciated. Thanks."

Yelka's Story



I am 22 years old, love music, talking politics, eggplant, old vintage dresses and paraphernalia. I am passionate about the awareness of the lifelong friend of mine - lymphoedema. However, there was a time where I didn't want to face it at all. The media likes to depict a certain profile of young women; tall, thin and with an almost boyish figure. Being a young woman today is hard enough, but an imperfection like lymphoedema makes it even harder.

Last year was one hell of a ride. I landed myself a mentorship with my favourite musician, started working in the disability field ... and put on a whopping 24 kilos.

I didn't moisturise at all, didn't wear my stockings - I didn't want to accept my lymphoedema. I became depressed. I was in and out of hospital with cellulitis. My legs ballooned in size!

I have always struggled with my weight, but I decided that I would try and pummel my newly found comfort weight off. I am extremely self conscious and struggled to walk into the gym, but I found a personal trainer and with support and persistence I managed to shed 26 flipping kilos! It felt really good.



I have a long way to go but it WILL happen. "Slow and steady wins the race." The hardest part is starting to take care of yourself, I urge you to just make a start. You will feel better and your lymphoedema will love you for it.