



Home → Health Topics → Edema

URL of this page: <https://medlineplus.gov/edema.html>

## Edema

Also called: Dropsy

Edema means swelling caused by fluid in your body's tissues. It usually occurs in the feet, ankles and legs, but it can involve your entire body.

Causes of edema include:

- Eating too much salt
- Sunburn
- Heart failure [<https://medlineplus.gov/heartfailure.html>]
- Kidney disease [<https://medlineplus.gov/kidneydiseases.html>]
- Liver problems from cirrhosis [<https://medlineplus.gov/cirrhosis.html>]
- Pregnancy
- Problems with lymph nodes [<https://medlineplus.gov/lymphedema.html>] , especially after mastectomy [<https://medlineplus.gov/mastectomy.html>]
- Some medicines
- Standing or walking a lot when the weather is warm

To keep swelling down, your health care provider may recommend keeping your legs raised when sitting, wearing support stockings, limiting how much salt you eat, or taking a medicine called a diuretic - also called a water pill.

## Start Here

- Edema [<https://familydoctor.org/condition/edema/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)  
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/condicion/edema-es/?adfree=true>]
- Edema [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/edema/symptoms-causes/syc-20366493?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/edema/symptoms-causes/syc-20366493?p=1>]
- When Body Parts Swell: Taking a Closer Look at Edema [<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2022/07/when-body-parts-swell>]  (National Institutes of Health)  
Also in Spanish [<https://salud.nih.gov/recursos-de-salud/nih-noticias-de-salud/cuando-las-partes-del-cuerpo-se-hinchchan>]

## Treatments and Therapies

- Diuretics [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/high-blood-pressure/in-depth/diuretics/ART-20048129?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)

## Specifics

- Foot Swelling during Air Travel: A Concern? [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/edema/expert-answers/foot-swelling/faq-20057828?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/edema/expert-answers/foot-swelling/faq-20057828?p=1>]

- Hand Swelling during Exercise: A Concern? [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/edema/expert-answers/hand-swelling/faq-20058255?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/edema/expert-answers/hand-swelling/faq-20058255?p=1>]
- Hives and Angioedema [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/hives-and-angioedema/symptoms-causes/syc-20354908?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/hives-and-angioedema/symptoms-causes/syc-20354908?p=1>]
- Leg Swelling [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/symptoms/leg-swelling/basics/definition/SYM-20050910?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/symptoms/leg-swelling/basics/definition/sym-20050910?p=1>]
- Pulmonary Edema [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/pulmonary-edema/symptoms-causes/syc-20377009?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/pulmonary-edema/symptoms-causes/syc-20377009?p=1>]
- What Is Macular Edema? [<https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/what-is-macular-edema>]  
 (American Academy of Ophthalmology)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.aao.org/salud-ocular/enfermedades/edema-macular>]

## Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Edema [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Edema%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  
 (National Institutes of Health)

## Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Bone marrow edema in osteoarthritis and bone trauma. Diagnose and treatment. [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40728338>]
- Article: Obestasis. [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40698486>]
- Article: Effect of different administration methods of dexamethasone on postoperative pain and... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40604759>]
- Edema -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Edema%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bdat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

## Find an Expert

- National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute [<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/>] 

## Women

- What Causes Ankle Swelling during Pregnancy -- and What Can I Do about It? [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/pregnancy-week-by-week/expert-answers/swelling-during-pregnancy/faq-20058467?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/healthy-lifestyle/pregnancy-week-by-week/expert-answers/swelling-during-pregnancy/faq-20058467?p=1>]

## Patient Handouts

- Abdominal tap [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003896.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003896.htm>]
- Angioedema [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000846.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000846.htm>]
- Foot, leg, and ankle swelling [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003104.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003104.htm>]

- Pulmonary edema [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000140.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000140.htm>]
- Swelling [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003103.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003103.htm>]



## MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

[Abdomen - swollen](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003122.htm) [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003122.htm>]

[Abdominal tap](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003896.htm) [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003896.htm>]

[Angioedema](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000846.htm) [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000846.htm>]

[C1 esterase inhibitor](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003353.htm) [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003353.htm>]

[Facial swelling](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003105.htm) [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003105.htm>]

[Foot, leg, and ankle swelling](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003104.htm) [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003104.htm>]

[Hydrops fetalis](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007308.htm) [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007308.htm>]

[Pulmonary edema](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000140.htm) [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000140.htm>]

[Swelling](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003103.htm) [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003103.htm>]

## Related Health Topics

[Lymphatic Diseases](https://medlineplus.gov/lymphaticdiseases.html) [<https://medlineplus.gov/lymphaticdiseases.html>]

## National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Edema* is the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute  
[<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/>]

MedlinePlus links to health information from the National Institutes of Health and other federal government agencies. MedlinePlus also links to health information from non-government Web sites. See our disclaimer [<https://medlineplus.gov/disclaimers.html>] about external links and our quality guidelines [<https://medlineplus.gov/criteria.html>].

The information on this site should not be used as a substitute for professional medical care or advice. Contact a health care provider if you have questions about your health.

---

National Library of Medicine 8600 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20894 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services National Institutes of Health

Last updated July 3, 2017