

LYMPHATIC FILARIASIS



Partners in Disease Control Programs

Lymphatic Filariasis (LF) is a parasitic disease caused by microscopic worms introduced into the body by the bites of infected mosquitoes. LF damages the lymphatic system, causing grossly abnormal swelling, and can cause kidney damage.

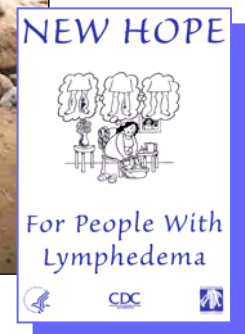
Elephantiasis is a more commonly known symptom of LF. Legs and arms become so enlarged that the victim cannot maintain a normal lifestyle and is stigmatized socially and psychologically.

Hydrocele is a swelling of the male genitals that prevents normal marital relations and interferes with employment.

Research has shown that the disease can be controlled with a combination drug therapy. GlaxoSmithKline pharmaceutical company has committed to donating its deworming drug albendazole in the international fight against LF. In Africa, the albendazole is combined with Mectizan[®], donated by Merck & Co., Inc.



This Haitian is one of **120 million persons** worldwide that suffers from LF and elephantiasis.



Filariasis clinics and community-based "Hope Club" support groups teach elephantiasis patients simple hygiene practices to avoid infection.

The Fight Against LF

- Control of LF requires annual, community-wide deworming drug treatment to destroy the filaria and prevent transmission by mosquitoes.
- Treatment of lymphedema and elephantiasis requires regular cleaning of affected limbs to reduce infection.
- I.M.A. collaborates with the Global Alliance for Elimination of Filariasis, an international disease elimination program of the World Health Organization, funded by a \$20 million grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation administered through a world Bank trust fund.
- I.M.A. has partnered with Ministries of Health in Tanzania and Haiti, donor pharmaceutical companies and other non-governmental health care organizations to combat LF in Tanzania and in the north region of Haiti.