

# How to Care for an Extravasation

## Information for patients

### What is extravasation?

Extravasation is the leaking of medication/contrast out of the vein into tissue.

Today you received medication/contrast medium that may leak out of your vein and under your skin. If this happens, it can cause skin irritation, sores, and/or injury to the tissues where the medication/contrast was given.

**Name of the medication/contrast medium that may extravasate:**

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### What to do

To lessen the discomfort and irritation, follow the checked step(s) below.

**Your nurse or doctor will tell you which steps to follow.**

✓	What to do	Why is this important?
	Apply a <b>COLD</b> compress to injection site 4-5 times a day for 15-20 minutes over the next 24 hours	This will lessen the swelling and discomfort, and may reduce tissue irritation
	Apply a <b>WARM</b> compress to injection site 4-5 times a day for 15-20 minutes over the next 24 hours	This will lessen the swelling and discomfort, and may reduce tissue irritation
	Raise the affected area with a pillow as much as possible over the next 24 hours	This will help lessen the swelling
	Apply corticosteroid cream as instructed by your doctor/pharmacist until the redness goes away. You will receive the prescription for the cream from your doctor. <b>Stop using the cream if you get blisters.</b> You may apply a dry gauze pad loosely over the cream to protect your clothing.	This will help reduce redness and swelling.
	Gently pad the area dry with a towel after showering or bathing. <b>DO NOT RUB.</b> Before placing the area in water, cover as directed by your nurse or doctor.	This will help protect the area while it heals and prevent infection.

**See back page for more information**

## Other Tips

- Do not apply any lotion, cream, or ointments to the site unless told to do so by your doctor or nurse
- Cover the affected site from the sun
- Do not wear tight clothing over the affected area

### Call your doctor or nurse if you:

- Notice any changes at the site, including increased pain or redness, blisters, streaking along the arm, any signs of skin breakdown, or swelling
- Develop a fever, which is when your temperature is:  
    above 38.3°C (100.9°F)  
    OR  
    above 38.0°C (100.4°F) for longer than an hour
- Have any questions or concerns

## Contact Information

Symptom Support Telephone Service

During the day: Cancer Centre Symptom Support 705-728-9090 x79565

Evenings, weekends and holidays: Bayshore CAREchart 1-877-681-3057

Please visit [www.rvh.on.ca](http://www.rvh.on.ca) for the latest information and hours of operation.

If you need urgent medical help, go to your nearest emergency department. Bring your Fever Card and Patient Information Sheet if you have one.