



Care of Suspected Extravasation



You are receiving this information because some chemotherapy medicine may have leaked out from your vein and is now under your skin. This is called extravasation (ex-tra-va-say-shun).

When extravasation happens, it can cause skin irritation, sores, or injure the tissue below your skin.

Listed in this pamphlet are some therapies to help reduce the symptoms of extravasation.

Chemotherapy Drug: _____



Important to know

- Do not apply any lotion, cream, and ointments unless you are told to do so by your doctor or nurse;
- Do not expose the area to sunlight;
- Avoid tight clothing over the affected area;
- Do not put the affected area under water. You can leave the area unprotected if you are taking a shower. You can take a bath if you keep the area above water.

How to care for the area

Listed below are some therapies used to treat extravasation. Your nurse will check (✓) and further explain the ones you need to do. These therapies will help reduce swelling and pain. Your nurse will also call you on a regular basis to check on your condition.

✓	Therapy	Why?
	<p>Apply a cold compress to the area four to five times a day for 15 to 20 minutes. Do this over the next 24 to 48 hours.</p> <p>For a cold compress, use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frozen vegetable bag wrapped in a damp cloth. • Ice in a sealable bag, wrapped in a damp cloth. • A cold compress bought from the store. Follow the directions carefully. 	<p>This decreases swelling and pain. It may also reduce irritation (e.g., itching) to the tissue.</p>
	<p>Apply a warm compress to injection site four to five times a day for 15 to 20 minutes. Do this over the next 24 to 48 hours.</p> <p>For a warm compress, use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm water to dampen a face cloth or towel. Refresh when it cools to room temperature. • A warm compress bought at the store. Follow the directions carefully. 	<p>This decreases swelling and pain. It may also reduce irritation (e.g., itching) to the tissue.</p>
	<p>Elevate the affected arm on a pillow whenever possible.</p>	<p>This helps to reduce swelling.</p>
	<p>Do not immerse the area under water. You may shower. Gently pat the area dry with a towel. Do not rub.</p>	<p>This helps to protect the area while it heals.</p>
	<p>Apply 2 mL of dimethylsulfoxide (DMSO) 70% solution to an area two times greater than what is affected. Allow to air dry. Do not cover. Repeat four (4) times a day for at least 7 days.</p>	<p>This may help reduce damage to your skin.</p>



When do I need to call for help?

You must call your family doctor or the London Regional Cancer Program Telephone Triage Nurse (TTN) if you get any of these symptoms:

- Fever (temperature of more than 38° C or 100.4° F);
- Increased pain;
- Redness or streaking along the vein;
- Blisters and peeling skin;
- Swelling.

Please tell the doctor or nurse the name of the chemotherapy medicine used in your treatment.

The TTN is available Monday to Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Call 519-685-8600 and press option '3'.

After hours, holidays, and on weekends, call your Family Physician or go to your nearest Emergency Department.

Source: Cancer Care Ontario