

# Care at home after an extravasation injury: DMSO and cold pack

An extravasation injury occurred during your anti-cancer treatment.

Your injury happened with a medicine called: \_\_\_\_\_

## What is an extravasation injury?

An **extravasation injury** happens when some of the anti-cancer medicine leaks out of the vein and into the surrounding tissue.

The medicine may irritate your skin and tissues, causing swelling or blistering in the area. Sometimes there might be more serious damage, such as ulcers or blisters.

## What to do at home

### Continue treatment

Your nurse has already started treatment for the injury. You need to continue this at home.

Follow the instructions provided by your doctor or nurse, and the **treatment guidelines** on the next page.

You will also be given follow up appointments to monitor your injury.

### Watch and protect the injury

The injury needs to be protected and watched for a few days/weeks:

- Look at the injured area at least once every day to see if there are any changes e.g. in colour, or development of blistering or peeling.
- Do not rub or scratch the area.
- Do not wear tight clothing on the area.
- Protect the area from sunlight.
- Raise the injured arm on a pillow if this helps with your comfort.
- Continue to use your arm and exercise/move gently.
- Only use creams or lotions on the injured area recommended by your doctor or nurse.
- Take medication to relieve pain if needed and as directed by your doctor or nurse.



## Get medical help if you have any of the following problems

Problem	When	What to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>A temperature of 38°C or higher</b></li><li>• <b>Severe pain</b></li><li>• <b>The injury gets worse:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– increased redness</li><li>– increased swelling</li><li>– increased blistering</li></ul></li></ul>	<b>Day</b> (business hours)	Call your doctor or nurse <b>immediately</b> .
	<b>Night</b> (after hours)	Go to the nearest <b>hospital emergency department</b> or <b>call 000 for an ambulance</b> .

## Contact numbers

Daytime: \_\_\_\_\_

Night/weekend: \_\_\_\_\_



For information for patient and carers please scan the QR code.

## Treatment guidelines

The treatments below are used to reduce swelling and irritation. They also reduce the chance of more damage.

### Important information about DMSO (dimethyl sulfoxide 99% solution)

- Only put DMSO on **dry skin**. Putting DMSO on wet skin can make it blister.
- Only put DMSO on the skin in the marked area.
- Do not breathe in the DMSO.
- Keep the DMSO at room temperature, out of direct sunlight and out of the reach of children or pets.
- It is normal to have a slight garlic taste or smell on your breath while using DMSO.

### Treatment instructions

#### Step 1: Treat the area with DMSO

**When to use this treatment:** Use every 6 hours (during waking hours) for at least 7 days and the area is reviewed by your healthcare team.

<p><b>How to prepare:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure you are in a well-ventilated area.</li> <li>• Wash and dry your hands.</li> <li>• Put on a face mask.</li> <li>• Put on 2 pairs of disposable gloves.</li> <li>• Make sure the skin around the injury is dry.</li> </ul>	<p><b>How to use the treatment:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use either a cotton bud OR a glass dropper:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Cotton bud: dampen the cotton bud with DMSO and paint a thin layer over the marked area.</li> <li>b. Glass dropper: use 4 drops for every 10 cm<sup>2</sup> (size of the palm of your hand) of the marked area.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Let the area dry completely.</li> <li>3. Do not cover with a dressing.</li> </ol>
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#### Step 2: Use a COLD pack on the area

**When to use this treatment:** After each DMSO treatment for the first 2 days only.

<p><b>How to prepare:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure the DMSO has completely dried.</li> </ul>	<p><b>How to use the treatment:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure the cold pack is dry on the outside. Put it in a plastic bag if needed.</li> <li>2. Put a thin, clean cloth (e.g. tea towel) over the injured area.</li> <li>3. Place the cold pack on the injured area and leave for 15 to 20 minutes.*</li> <li>4. Remove the cold pack. Clean and put back into freezer</li> </ol> <p>* Remove the cold pack sooner if it causes discomfort.</p>
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### Other instructions

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### Follow-up appointments

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Clinic: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Clinic: \_\_\_\_\_

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