

# Care at home after an extravasation injury: cold or warm compress



## What is an extravasation injury

An **extravasation injury** occurred during your chemotherapy treatment. An extravasation injury happens when some of the chemotherapy drug leaks out of the vein and into the surrounding tissue.

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

**Your injury happened with a drug called:** .....

## What should you do at home?

The nurses have already started treatment for your injury in the clinic. You need to continue the treatment at home.

The injury needs to be watched closely for a few days or weeks. You will be given follow-up appointments at the clinic. The nurses will check your injury at each appointment.

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

### Also:

- Look at the area around the injury every day to see if there are any changes - change in colour, more redness, 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.
- Exercise/move the injured arm gently.
- Do not use any other creams or lotions on the area without asking your doctor or clinic first.

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

Problem	When	What to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a temperature of 38°C or higher</li><li>• severe pain</li><li>• the injury gets worse:<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>

## Contact numbers:

Daytime: .....

Night/weekend: .....

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## Treatment guideline

These treatments may reduce the chance of more damage from the injury.

Your doctor or nurse will have explained and demonstrated the required treatment described below.

**Only use the treatment that has a tick**

Use treatment if it has a tick (✓)	Treatment instructions
<b>Use a cold compress on the area</b>	
	<p>This is to reduce swelling and irritation.</p> <p>Do this every 6 hours for the first 2 days.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put a thin, clean cloth (e.g. tea towel) over the injured area or around the cold pack, make sure the cold pack has a waterproof cover (e.g. plastic bag) to make sure the outside is dry.</li> <li>Place on the injured area and leave for 15 – 20 minutes.</li> <li>Remove the cold pack.</li> </ol>
<b>Use a warm compress on the area</b>	
	<p>This is to reduce swelling and irritation.</p> <p>Do this every 6 hours for the first 2 days</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put a thin, clean cloth (e.g. tea towel) over the injured area or around the warm pack, make sure the warm pack has a waterproof cover (e.g. plastic bag) to make sure the outside is dry.</li> <li>Place on the injured area and leave for 15 – 20 minutes.</li> <li>Remove the warm pack.</li> </ol>
<b>Other instructions</b>	
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## Follow-up appointments

Date.....  
 Time.....  
 Clinic.....

Date.....  
 Time.....  
 Clinic.....

## Working together to lessen the impact of cancer

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