

Extravasation Care for Cancer Patients

During your systemic therapy treatment, a rare complication may have occurred called **extravasation**. This is when a drug leaks out of the vein and under the skin. This may cause redness and swelling in the area that may look like a burn.

A Systemic Therapy Nurse will call you within 1-3 days after your treatment to see how you are doing and to decide next steps.

It is important for you to care for your skin using these instructions:

**Systemic Therapy Nurse will put a check mark next to the treatment that is best for you (warm or cold).*

	<p>Use a cold pack on the area. Repeat the treatment every 6 hours for the first 2 days.</p> <p>A cold compress may be a bag of ice or a store-bought ice/gel pack.</p>
	<p>Use a warm pack on the area. Repeat the treatment every 6 hours for the first 2 days.</p> <p>A warm compress may be a towel soaked with warm water (not hot) or a store-bought gel pack.</p>

How to Use the Treatment:

1. Take the pack (or warm towel) and cover it with a plastic bag.
2. Put a thin, clean cloth (e.g. tea towel) over the affected area or around the pack.
3. Place the pack on the affected area and leave on for 15 to 20 minutes only. Do not fall asleep with the pack in place.

Other Useful Things to Know:

Your Systemic Therapy Nurse will outline the affected area with ink and may take a picture with your consent to help watch for any changes in size. Look at the affected area every day to see if there are any other changes (e.g. change in colour, increased pain, blistering or peeling).

! The affected area needs to be protected and watched closely for a few days or weeks:

- Do not rub or scratch the area.
- Do not wear tight clothing on the area.
- Protect the area from sunlight.

- Exercise/move the affected arm gently. Open and close fingers and rotate wrist.
- Do not use any creams or lotions on the area without asking your cancer care team first.
- Raise your arm on a pillow, as much as you can, for the next 24 to 48 hours to help reduce swelling.
- Try to keep the area dry. Showering is okay, but activities that keep the affected area in water for a long time (washing dishes, going in hot tubs or swimming pools) are not a good idea unless it's protected with something watertight.
- After a shower or bath, gently pat the area dry. Do not rub the area.
- Use over the counter pain medication (such as Tylenol® /Advil®) as needed. Check your temperature before taking to make sure you do not have a fever. If you do have a fever (temperature above 38.5°C), follow the directions on your yellow alert card.
- You may put dry gauze loosely over the area.

Call your Cancer Care Team at _____ during office hours if you have:

- More pain
- Increased swelling
- Redness that spreads past the outline drawn by the Systemic Therapy Nurse.
- Blisters
- Skin breakdown (new areas of open skin or oozing)
- If you have a fever, follow the instructions on the Yellow Alert Card.

Outside of office hours, if your above symptoms become unmanageable please go to your closest emergency department.

Patient and family feedback is very important to us.

We would like to invite you to send any comments or suggestions on how to improve this booklet to education.cancercare@nshealth.ca or feel free to call us at 1-866-599-2267.

Looking for more health information?

Find this brochure and all our patient resources here: <http://library.nshealth.ca/cancer>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

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This pamphlet is for educational purposes only.

It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider.

If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.