



Patient information following extravasation of anti-cancer therapy

Introduction

You have been given this leaflet because you have had an extravasation. It is not meant to replace the discussion between you and the nursing/ medical team treating you, but it should help you to understand more about what has been discussed.

What is extravasation?

Extravasation is the accidental leakage or infiltration of drugs outside of the vein and into the surrounding tissues. Some of these drugs (often anti-cancer treatments), may lead to an immediate painful reaction and result in local tissue damage.

You may have noticed pain, stinging, swelling or other changes to the skin at the site of drug administration, or the nurse may have noticed that the drug was not flowing in easily.

Why did this happen?

Extravasation is a rare but known complication of intravenous anti-cancer treatment. It can be difficult to prevent this, even though we take all possible precautions. The important thing is that it has been detected and treated.

Why is extravasation a problem?

The problems can vary depending on which drug is involved. It can include pain, stiffness and ulcers to the affected area. The treatment you were given when the leakage was found should prevent some of the damage. We will continue to treat any damage until it has healed. Very occasionally patients will require plastic surgery to repair the damage caused by the extravasation. If necessary the medical team will discuss this with you.

What treatment have I received to prevent tissue damage?

The nurse/medical team have given you the recommended treatment for the extravasation. Although this will help to minimise the chance of developing further problems, you will need to keep checking the area every day.

The treatment you received was

Time and Date _____

Information for patients

Once a day, check the area for the following:

- Has the area changed colour or increased in redness?
- Is the area blistering, peeling or flaking?
- Is the area hot?
- Is the area more uncomfortable?
- Is the pain making it difficult for you to exercise your arm or hand?

If you answered '**yes**' to any of the questions in the checklist above, or if you have any other concerns, then you should contact the Acute Oncology Service (red card) - **07789651543**

What else do I need to do?

- Gently exercise the affected arm or hand
- Take mild painkillers if required
- Do not apply any other lotions, creams or ointments, unless you have been instructed to do so by a doctor or nurse
- Do not expose the area to strong sunlight
- Avoid wearing tight clothing around the affected area
- Protect the affected area when bathing or showering, so that it does not get wet
- Raise the hand or arm on a pillow to reduce any swelling

Additional information and recommendations from your treatment area:

You will need to come back to hospital to have the affected area reviewed.

Date _____
Time _____
Location _____

If you require this information in another format, such as a different language, large print, braille or audio version please ask a member of staff or email patientexperience@uhb.nhs.uk.