

Extravasation: what to do if the contrast injection leaks out

Radiology Department Patient Information Leaflet

Introduction

This leaflet gives you information about what to do if the contrast injection leaks out after your MRI or CT scan. This is known medically as extravasation.

What is extravasation?

Contrast dyes that are given to people having an MRI or CT scan are usually given by injection into a vein in your arm or hand.

Occasionally, the injection may leak out from the vein to the tissues under the skin – this is known as extravasation. If this has happens, you will experience a stinging sensation where the contrast has gone into the tissue and it can be painful. This will usually wear off after about 30 minutes.

You may also have some swelling in your arm or hand – please follow the instructions in this leaflet if this happens.

What will happen next?

The contrast fluid is very safe and should be reabsorbed by your body. However, you may be left with a bruise for several days.

Rarely, people may experience an allergic reaction to the contrast but this can happen whether or not an extravasation has occurred.

In most cases, the leaked contrast should not cause you any health problems.

What should I do?

- Keep the area raised above the level of your heart as much as possible for 24 to 48 hours or until it settles. You can use pillows to do this or if you are in hospital, we will give you a special sling.
- You can reduce discomfort by:
 - applying a cold compress. **Caution** – ice can cause burns so do not apply it directly to your skin. If you use ice, wrap it in a clean towel.
 - gentle massage of the affected area.
- If needed, take painkillers such as paracetamol, if you can take them (always read the label; do not exceed the recommended dose).

Are there any risks?

In most cases, you will not need any further treatment. Rarely, this can develop into a more severe problem.

For this reason, if you have any of the following symptoms, **contact your GP, or if your GP practice is closed, go to your nearest Emergency Department (A&E)**. Show them this leaflet.

- Pain increases or lasts for more than four hours.
- Reddening of the skin, or any change in skin colour around the injection site.
- Any feeling of heat or coldness of the skin at or around the injection site.
- Pins and needles or loss of sensation (feeling) in your hand or arm.
- Your skin starts to blister at the site of the injection.

Your name and patient ID:

.....

Date and time:.....

This form was explained to you by:

.....

If you have any questions, or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, please contact:

Russells Hall CT department on 01384 456111 ext. 5289
(9am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

Russells Hall MRI department on 01384 456111 ext. 2106
(9am to 5pm, excluding 12noon to 2pm, Monday to Friday)

Russells Hall Hospital switchboard number: 01384 456111

This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:

<http://dudleygroup.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/radiology/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email patient.information@dgh.nhs.uk

This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.

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此宣传单可提供大字版本、音频版本和其它语言版本，请拨打电话：0800 073 0510。

Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

ਇਹ ਪਰਚਾ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ, ਬੋਲ ਕੇ ਰੀਕਾਰਡ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਦੂਸਰੀਆਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ, 0800 073 0510 ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜੀ।

Aceasta brosură poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru vă rugăm sunați la 0800 073 0510.

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