

How to Care for a Vascular Access Event – Cold Compress

Vascular access events, such as extravasation and infiltration, may occur when medications are given intravenously (delivered into a vein/IV). There is a possibility that some of the medication you received today leaked out of your vein and under your skin. This can cause skin irritation, sores, or deeper tissue injury. The IV site is where the medication enters your body through the IV catheter.

To minimize discomfort and irritation, follow these instructions.

Care of the IV Site

- Apply a cold compress to the IV site 4-5 times a day for 20 minutes over the next 24- 48 hours. This will help ease swelling and discomfort, and it may reduce irritation.
- Follow these recommendations:
 - ✓ Elevate the affected arm on a pillow as often as you can for the next 24-48 hours.
 - ✓ After showering with mild soap, gently dry the site. If you take a tub bath or immerse the area in anything but rapidly running clean water, cover the site first with a protective water-tight dressing or barrier.
 - ✓ Cover the area before you go outside to protect it from sunlight.
 - ✓ Do not wear tight or irritating clothing over the IV site.
 - ✓ Do not massage the area.
 - ✓ Do not apply any lotion, cream, or ointments unless instructed to do so by your doctor.

When to Call

Call us if you have:

- changes at the site such as increased pain or redness, blisters, signs of skin breakdown, sensation changes, impaired movement, swelling, or you see a red streak in your arm
- **a temperature of more than 100.4°F (38°C)**
- questions, problems, or concerns

Mon- Fri, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.: Call your clinic

After 5pm/weekends/holidays: Call **716-845-2300** and our Call Center staff will assist you.

Please Note: You may be asked to come in for a follow-up appointment so that we can check on your progress. Check your itinerary or patient portal for appointments.