

# Care if there was a leak of contrast liquid during your scan or X-ray (extravasation)

Department of Radiology

Information for Patients

Last reviewed: June 2023

Next review: June 2026

Leaflet number: 107 Version: 2

## Why have I been given this leaflet?

You have had a CT scan, MRI scan or a procedure that uses X-rays, and were given an injection of contrast liquid into a vein as part of your examination. You have been given this leaflet because when you had this injection some of the contrast liquid leaked into surrounding tissue under your skin. When this happens it is called contrast extravasation.

## How will this affect me?

Symptoms you may get at the site of the injection include:

- a cool feeling.
- a lighter colour of the skin.
- swelling.
- tenderness or discomfort.
- burning or stinging pain.
- redness of the skin.

Some symptoms will wear off after a few hours. However, some symptoms such as discomfort, stinging and swelling can last for a few days.

Do not worry, as it doesn't usually cause any problems.

Please turn over

**Health information and support is available at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit [www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk) for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals  
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact [InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)

## Why has this happened?

The flexible needle that was used may have punctured your vein. The risk of this happening is higher if your veins are small and/ or fragile.

## How is it treated?

We will put a cold compress over the area straight away and lift your arm to help with the swelling. We may need to keep checking your arm while you are still with us, before we let you go home.

## What do I need to look out for when I get home?

Some bruising and swelling is normal. **If any swelling does not improve or gets worse you must seek advice straight away - contact your GP, urgent care centre or call the NHS helpline on 111.**

**If you have any of the following when at home, you must go to your nearest Emergency Department straight away (in Leicester this is at the Leicester Royal Infirmary):**

- Your skin turns a bluish colour.
- The affected area becomes an open sore like an ulcer.
- Your skin turns red or blisters.
- Loss of feeling (numbness), tingling or pins and needles in the affected arm.
- Increasing or persistent pain lasting more than 4 hours.

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔  
على هذه المعلومات بلغةٍ أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل  
જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।  
Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

**If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email [equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)**