

Chemotherapy Extravasation

What is extravasation?

You get your chemotherapy (chemo) through a vein in your arm or a port in your chest. Rarely, a chemo drug may leak out of the vein or port into the surrounding tissue. This is called extravasation.

Extravasation may happen if the tube in your arm slips out of the vein. It can happen if the tube in your port slips out. Sometimes it happens even when the tube stays in place.

Is extravasation harmful?

Some chemo drugs can damage the skin and tissue near the leak. The chemo drug may cause these problems:

- Skin irritation
- Redness
- Swelling
- Blisters
- Wounds that are hard to heal

These things can affect how much damage happens:

- Type of drug
- Amount of drug that leaks
- Strength of the drug
- How long the leak lasts

What are the signs of extravasation?

Watch for these signs around where your chemotherapy goes in:

- Pain, burning, or stinging
- Redness
- Swelling
- Changes to the look of your skin
- Discomfort of any kind

If any of these happen during your infusion, tell your nurse right away.

If any of these happen after your infusion, call your doctor's office right away.

Questions?

Contact your cancer care team via MyChart or call

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In an emergency, call 911 or go to your closest emergency department.