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Imaging Department

SOP managing extravasation of IV contrast

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Scope and Purpose of SOP

To provide standard practice for the aftercare of extravasation.
To provide outpatients with information
To ensure inpatients aftercare is communicated effectively

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Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all cannulating staff to be vigilant in diagnosis and aftercare of extravasation by adhering to this SOP.

Procedure

- At the first sign of extravasation - should the patient express discomfort, tissue swelling is noticed or any acute changes at the injection site **the injection must be stopped immediately.**
- Explain your suspicions to the patient and the procedures to follow so as to obtain their co-operation.
- Aspirate any residual contrast from the cannula to minimise progressive injury and subsequent tissue damage.
- Remove the cannula.
- Encourage the patient to move and/or massage the area if appropriate.
- Apply an ice pack where appropriate.
- If blistering/tissue breakdown occurs the patient must be referred to a plastic surgeon.
- Document thoroughly on CRIS and E-Care, and record the incident on DATIX.

- **Outpatients** – Patient to remain in the department for observation for at least 30mins, checking on them regularly. If either they or you are concerned in any way seek advice from senior CT staff member or Radiologist.
Fill out a Patient Information Sheet (Appendix A) which is located in the forms folder with the incident details and discuss this with them.

- **Inpatients** – The patient and the referring team must be notified. Update patient E-care notes thoroughly by copying in the extravasation template (Appendix B), the link for which can be found on the desktop of all computers in the CT scanning control rooms. Fill in the appropriate information

References and Related Documentation

www.rcr.ac.uk Standards for intravascular contrast administration to adult patients
pg. 12

Appendix A

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Milton Keynes
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Patient Information

Contrast Extravasation Advice

As part of your CT scan, we were required to use an injection of *contrast media* (dye) into one of your veins. Sometimes an *extravasation* (leak) may occur, where the dye leaks out of the vein into the surrounding tissues. This may have caused you some pain or tightening around the injection site.

You will have been observed in the department, and ice may have been applied.

This sheet aims to explain what you may expect and what you can do.

For the next three days please note the following.

- Continue to move your arm freely and massage when possible. The contrast (dye) is water soluble and this will help it disperse and the swelling to go down.
- Keep the arm elevated when possible
- Drink plenty of non-alcoholic drinks
- Take paracetamol (unless you are allergic to it) for any localised pain
- Continue to apply a cold compress for 15mins at a time and up to three times a day when possible.

What do I need to look out for?

- Blistering over the injection site or any significant changes in skin colour.
- Increase/decrease of skin temperature at the site (compared to your skin elsewhere)
- Numbness in your fingers
- Hardness at the injection site which is still present after three days
- Pain which is more severe or not controlled with simple painkillers

If you experience any of these symptoms attend the A&E Department, taking this letter with you.

CONTRAST MEDIA	DATE & TIME	AMOUNT OF CONTRAST EXTRAVASATED	SITE OF EXTRAVASATION

This information has been produced to give you general information. If after reading it you have any concerns or require further explanation, please discuss with your healthcare [team](#)

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