

Extravasation of IV Contrast in MRI

Sometimes contrast leaks out of a vein and into the tissue. This is called an extravasation.

IV Contrast in MRI

The contrast used in MRI is very safe. If contrast would leak into the tissue around a vein, you may feel a dull ache for 2-3 days. This ache will get better as the contrast absorbs back into your body and the swelling improves. In most cases, the contrast used in MRI does not cause serious harm to the tissue.

Treatment

- Raise your arm above the heart until swelling improves. When you are sitting in a chair or lying down, place a pillow under your arm.
- Apply a cold compress for pain relief.
- Apply a warm compress to help the contrast absorb back into your body.

One treatment is not better than another. **Do** what feels best.

When to Call

Call your local doctor if you have any of the symptoms below.

- Numbness or tingling in the affected hand or arm.
- Redness or streaks at the injection site.
- Blisters around the site.
- Pain that does not go away.
- Coolness of the lower arm or hand.
- Any increase in the size of your arm.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 1/2025 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing HF#8211.