



Radiology Guide to Intravenous Extravasation



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What Happened?

In the course of your exam, the material that is used as a contrast for your CT or IVP leaked into the tissues around your IV site.

Why?

Occasionally the IV site is not stable and the catheter pulls from the vein. Veins are sometimes hard to find when you are dehydrated or nervous. Introduction of the IV catheter sometimes is difficult and occasionally the force of injection does not support the vein. When this occurs, the material meant to flow through your vein is deposited in the surrounding tissue.

What happens to me?

The area that has this unintentional deposit of contrast media may become swollen, bruised and/or inflamed. The contrast is safe but takes a period of time to absorb from the tissues.

What do I do?

Hot packs over the affected area are the best way to encourage absorption of the contrast from the tissues. A wash rag that has been run under hot water, rung out and applied is best. Do not microwave wet cloths as you may burn the skin unintentionally.

If there is no improvement between 6 and 8 hours from the injection you may need to be seen by your physician.

If you have questions or concerns, please call 515-643-2204 and ask to speak to a Radiology RN.



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