

Advice following injection of intravenous (IV) contrast media (Omnipaque, Visipaque, Niopam, Iomeron)

This factsheet tells you about iodine based intravenous (IV) contrast media (x-ray dye). It also provides advice following IV injection if given as part of your x-ray or scan. If you have any questions after reading this factsheet, please ask the radiographer.

What is IV contrast media used for?

IV contrast media is a form of positive contrast media, used for some x-ray scans. They show up blood vessels and any abnormalities on the images. They also improve the amount of information available to help make a diagnosis.

How is IV contrast media given?

They are given as an injection, usually into a vein in the arm. The amount injected is between 50-150ml. (The amount injected is adjusted for children).

What happens before I am given IV contrast media?

Please fill in the patient questionnaire and consent form for contrast media and discuss any concerns with the radiographer before your scan.

When can I go home after being given IV contrast media?

You should stay in the area where you were given your contrast injection for 30 minutes and on hospital or clinic premises for one hour after the injection of IV contrast media. You should not drive or operate machinery for one hour after the scan. During the rest of the day, you should drink 500mls extra fluids to rehydrate your body. This can be tea, coffee, water or any soft drink. You may eat normally.

Children should be encouraged to drink freely. Parents should look for skin or other reactions and contact the Children's Unit if advice is needed.

Your medical team will usually tell you the results for the scan at your next clinic appointment. If you have not received a further appointment, please contact your team for further advice.

Does IV contrast media cause any side effects?

IV contrast media may cause side effects in some people. Your doctor will have chosen the contrast medium after considering the risks and benefits for this examination. The most frequent effects of IV contrast media are a mild sensation of warmth and a metallic taste in the mouth during the injection.



If you experience any of the following symptoms during or after the scan, please tell the radiographer straight away:

- Wheeziness, difficulty in breathing, tightness or pain in the chest
- Skin rash, lumps, itchy spots blisters on skin and in mouth, red/ itchy eyes, cough, running nose, sneezing or other allergic symptoms (these reactions may appear several hours or days after the injection)
- Dizziness or feeling faint
- Swelling of your face
- An unexpected change in the amount of urine produced and /or its appearance
- Pain at or near the injection site during or immediately following the injection.

Other, much rarer side effects which may occur during or after the scan include:

- Temporary change in taste
- Pain below the injection site
- Increased / abnormal sweating
- Cold feeling
- Headache
- Flushing
- Feeling sick (nausea), vomiting
- Chest pain
- Severe skin rash with peeling.

If you have experienced any side effects from this injection, it is very important to tell staff before you have further scans or tests at any hospital.

Contact details

If you have any queries or feel unwell after your scan, please call for advice.

The Royal Marsden Macmillan Hotline: 020 8915 6899
(Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

