

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

This information tells you about iodine based intravenous (IV) contrast media. It also provides advice following IV injection if given as part of your imaging test. If you have any questions after reading this information, please ask the radiographer.

What is IV contrast media used for?

IV contrast media is a form of positive contrast media, used for some imaging tests. They highlight 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 normally between 50 – 150ml. (The amount injected is adjusted for children).

What happens before I am given IV contrast media?

A questionnaire will have been completed to assess your suitability for contrast media. Your kidney function blood tests will have also been reviewed where required. You may have been asked for a blood sample to be tested in the department if we did not have recent results available.

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 after the injection. You should not drive or operate machinery for one hour after the injection. During the rest of the day, you should drink 500ml 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 of 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. Contrast media are given to patients after considering the risks and benefits for the examination, and the lowest possible dose is given. The most frequent effects of IV contrast media are a mild sensation of warmth and a metallic taste in the mouth during the injection. The contrast used is not radioactive



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

- 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 Hotline: 020 8915 6899
(Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

