
Bruising - following a
procedure involving
the insertion of a needle

Patient Information



Why have I got a bruise?

A bruise may develop after any procedure involving the insertion of a needle, such as a blood test or cannulation.

It is caused by blood leaking from the vein into the tissues.

Some people are more at risk of bruising, for example:

- If you are taking blood thinning drugs (anticoagulants) such as Warfarin, Clopidogrel, Aspirin, or are on blood thinning injections
- If you have a low platelet count
- If you generally bruise more easily

It may also be as a result of problems during the procedure such as having trouble finding a vein, or simply not pressing for long enough when the needle is removed.

What can be done to prevent bruising?

Please tell us if you are on anticoagulants or if you bruise more easily, as we can press for a longer time after the needle is removed.

We also ask that you keep your arm straight whilst pressing after a blood test as bending your arm can cause more bruising.

Is there anything I can do about bruising?

Putting an ice pack on the area may reduce any swelling.

Some people have found the following helpful in relieving the discomfort and discolouration of bruises:

- Hirudoid cream
- Lasonil cream
- Arnica gel/cream

These creams can be bought over the counter at your local chemist.

Please call us if your bruise becomes larger or if you experience any numbness in your arm or hand.

You can also contact us should you have any questions

Contact details

The Royal Marsden Macmillan Hotline

020 8915 6899

Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

References

This leaflet is evidence based wherever the appropriate evidence is available, and represents an accumulation of expert opinion and professional interpretation.

Details of the references used in writing this leaflet are available on request from:

The Royal Marsden Help Centre

Freephone: 0800 783 7176

Email: patientcentre@rmh.nhs.uk

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