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Advice for patients
following a blood
transfusion



Patient information

Advice for patients following a blood transfusion



Excellent patient care, together

Care after your blood transfusion

You may have had a blood transfusion as an inpatient or an outpatient.

Most blood transfusions take place without complications, but adverse reactions can occur occasionally. This leaflet describes how to spot any reaction and what action you should take. Reactions tend to occur within 24 hours of the transfusion but in some cases, they happen up to 28 days after your transfusion.

Date transfusion given:



Bleeding from the cannula site

When the nurse removes your intravenous cannula, gentle pressure is applied, and a dressing applied to the wound to reduce the risk of bleeding. This should remain in place overnight and be removed the following morning. If the cannula site starts to bleed after leaving the clinical area, remove the soiled dressing, apply a clean wad of tissue or gauze over the wound and press firmly. It may help to elevate the arm and use an icepack, once the bleeding has stopped, apply a clean dressing or plaster. If the bleeding fails to stop, contact the nearest hospital emergency service via the following number

Pain and swelling where the cannula was inserted

Pain and swelling near the cannula site may be a sign of bruising. If this occurs, apply an ice pack, and elevate the arm. You should telephone the ward where you received the transfusion for further advice on.

Telephone number (ward staff to complete): _____

They may arrange for you to return to the ward for further assessment or suggest you see your own General Practitioner (GP). If the problem occurs out-of-hours, contact your nearest hospital emergency service using the numbers above.

Redness and swelling or discharge around the cannula site

This may be a sign of infection. It is essential you see your GP the same day as you may require antibiotics. If the problem occurs out-of-hours, contact your nearest hospital emergency service via the numbers above.

More severe adverse reactions - It is essential you seek medical attention urgently by dialling 999 for an ambulance, bring this leaflet with you.

The symptoms to look out for include the following:

- Breathlessness/wheezing
- Unexplained cough following a blood transfusion
- Chest pain
- Swelling of lips/face
- Widespread itchy red rash or wheals
- Fever, hot and clammy
- Shivering/rigors
- Severe back/loin pain

Less severe adverse reactions - contact your GP if you experience any of the following symptoms:

- Extreme tiredness
- Blood in the urine
- Passing much less, or very dark urine
- Unexpected or unexplained bruising

How to contact us

A&E, Watford General Hospital: 01923 217759
Herts Urgent Care Centre, Hemele Hempstead Hospital: 01442 213141

Department name

[Watford General Hospital](#)

Vicarage Road
Watford
Hertfordshire WD18 0HB
Hospital switchboard: 01923 244366

Department name

[Hemel Hempstead Hospital](#)

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Hemel Hempstead
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PALS

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Language



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Survey - Friends and Family Test

We welcome feedback about your care, this feedback is shared with all staff so that we can improve patients' experience. Click this [link](#), scan the QR code with your smartphone or type in: bit.ly/4o3QVFJ.



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