

Infiltration

When you have a fistula or graft

What is an infiltration?

An infiltration (blow) means that the needle has been dislodged from inside the vein (fistula) or graft during needle insertion or during a dialysis treatment.

What can happen when an infiltration occurs?

When you have an infiltration, blood leaks outside of the fistula or graft into the surrounding tissues. This causes swelling and pain in the area.

Your fistula or graft will continue to function. It may become bruised, swollen and the area may feel firm to touch.

How is an infiltration treated?

The needle is removed and pressure applied to stop the bleeding.

Ice will be applied while in the dialysis unit. Apply ice to this area for 20 minutes only at a time. Wait ½ hour to apply ice again.

Do this 6 to 8 times for the next 24 hours to reduce pain and swelling. You only need enough ice to cover the affected area.

After the first 24 hours, apply warm (not hot) compresses. Place a warm wash cloth on the area for 20 minutes. Do this 6 to 8 times a day for the next 24 hours to promote healing. You only need the warm compress to cover the affected area.

The dialysis nurses will check your fistula or graft each dialysis treatment after you have an infiltration.