

After Your Blood Draw

Hematoma care instructions

This handout explains what to do if you have a hematoma after having a blood draw.

What is a hematoma?

A **hematoma** is a swollen area that is filled with blood. It may form at the puncture site after a blood draw.



A patient having a blood draw.

What can I expect?

The blood in the hematoma will be absorbed by your body over the next few days. Some of the blood will come to the surface of your skin and form a bruise. As this bruise heals, its color will change from “black and blue” to yellow-green, and then slowly fade. It may take a few weeks for the bruise to fade all the way.

What can I do to help the healing?

To help your hematoma heal, and to make your arm or hand feel better:

- Leave the pressure bandage on for at least **8 hours**. But, please remove the bandage **before 24 hours** have passed.
- Do not take aspirin or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) for **72 hours**.
- For a few hours, avoid lifting heavy objects with your arm or hand.
- Apply a cold pack, wrapped in a cloth, to the hematoma. A bag of frozen corn or peas works well. Do this a few times in the **first 24 hours** after the hematoma forms, for about 20 minutes at a time.
- During the **second 24 hours**, you may apply warm, moist compresses to the hematoma for about 20 minutes at a time.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns.

When to Call

Call your health care provider if your:

- Hand changes color (unless the blood draw was taken from your hand).
- Swelling gets worse.
- Arm has pain or discomfort, is throbbing, or feels numb.