

Caring for Your IV Site

An intravenous tube, or I.V., puts fluids or medicines directly into a vein, so they can go quickly into your bloodstream and the rest of the body.

Most of the time, I.V.s are placed in the back of the hand, the forearm, or the inside of the elbow.

The area where the I.V. went into the hand or arm may get a little sore or bruised after the I.V. is taken out.

So it's good to give this area a little extra care after you go home.

Keep an eye on the area for a few days.

Watch for any problems, like bruising or swelling.

If you notice bruising or swelling, try putting ice or a cold pack on the area for 10 to 20 minutes at a time.

Put a thin cloth between the ice and your skin.

You should be able to do your usual activities, unless the doctor said not to.

But make sure you're gentle with that part of the arm for a day or two.

You can bathe or shower as usual.

Call your doctor or get medical care right away if you have signs of infection, such as increased pain, swelling, warmth, or redness; red streaks leading from the site; pus or blood draining from the site; or a fever.

And be sure to contact your doctor if you see new or worse bruising or a large lump at the site.