

VEIN CARE

While you are receiving chemotherapy, we want to make your treatments as easy as possible. We need your help in keeping your veins healthy. Multiple needle sticks irritate the veins and make them increasingly difficult to find. The drugs used in your chemotherapy treatment may also be irritating. It is extremely important that your treatments be given through a "healthy vein." Also, once your treatment is completed, you will want healthy, easy to find veins for routine medical care and testing.

Ways to Improve Vein Condition

- Moist heat applied to the arms, from elbow to knuckles, for at least 30 minutes each day will dilate small veins and soften hard veins. Wrap warm wet towels around the arms and cover the towels with plastic to hold in the moist heat.
- A heating pad is a convenient method to use. The pad should be set at low or medium only.
- Squeezing on a soft ball, such as a stress relieve ball, is very effective in building veins. Do this exercise several times a day.
- Increase your fluid intake to help overall hydration and improve your veins.

To preserve the smaller peripheral veins, oncologists frequently recommend implantation of a central intravenous device that can be used for drawing blood samples as well as for delivering the chemotherapeutic medication.