

Venesection



Information for patients

Haematology



PROUD TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

SHEFFIELD TEACHING HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST



What is a venesection?

Venesection is the removal of up to half a litre (just under a pint) of blood from a vein in your arm. The aim of venesection is to reduce the number of red blood cells circulating around your body. The procedure is similar to that used when giving blood.

Why is it done?

Venesection is usually done to help people:

- Whose blood volume and thickness is higher than normal
- Who have higher levels of red blood cells circulating around their body
- Who have higher than normal levels of iron in their blood

Before you arrive for the venesection

To reduce the chances of dizziness following the venesection we recommend you have something to eat and drink before you arrive.

How is it done?

The blood is usually taken from a vein in your arm. You will be asked to lie down on a couch and to put your arm out. First we will check your blood pressure. Then we clean the skin on your arm with an antiseptic wipe. A needle is then inserted into a vein in your arm. Once in place, the needle is connected to a tube that is in turn connected to a polythene collecting bag. The blood is allowed to drain into the bag until enough has been drawn off. The needle is then removed and a firm dressing applied.

How long does it take?

The procedure usually takes 15-30 minutes but you will need to sit or lie down for up to 20 minutes afterwards and to have your blood pressure checked.

How often do I need this done?

This depends on why you need it done and your blood test results. Because this could be different for everyone, your doctor will tell you more about this.

Are there any risks involved?

Very few, you may find that you feel dizzy or faint shortly after the procedure. If this happens tell your doctor or the nurse who will be with you at all times. You may also bleed a little bit from the site where the needle was inserted.

Is there anything I should look out for when I go home?

Once you get home after having venesection, you may find that you bleed at the needle site. If this happens apply a pad of gauze or cotton wool over the site and keep pressure on it by pressing firmly.

Who should I contact if I have any concerns?

You can call the hospital on either of the numbers given below.

Ward O2 Day Unit

- **0114 2713607**
Monday to Friday, 7.30am - 8.00pm
Saturday, 8.00am - 4.00pm

Ward P3

- **0114 271 3626**



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