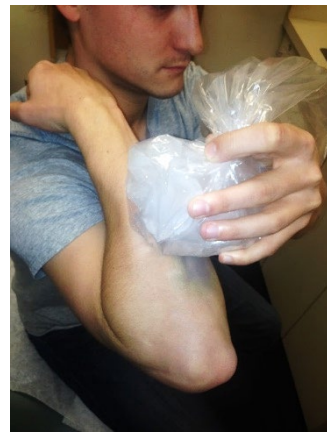


Taking Care of Bruises: For People Taking Blood Thinners

What can I do to take care of my bruises at home?

Bruising is common in patients taking blood thinners. Most of the time, bruising is not an emergency situation. Bruises can be treated at home by following these steps:

1. Ice will reduce pain and swelling in the bruised area. Put ice or cold packs on the area immediately to prevent or reduce swelling. use the ice or cold pack for 10-20 minutes, 3 or more times a day.
 - For the first 48 hours after an injury, avoid things that might increase swelling (such as hot showers, hot tubs, hot packs, or drinking alcohol).
 - After 48 to 72 hours, if the swelling is gone, apply heat for comfort using a warm moist washcloth or heating pad. Some experts recommend alternating between hot and cold treatments. To prevent losing flexibility, do not limit motion in the part of your body that is bruised.
2. Elevate the bruised area (keep the area raised up) on pillows while you are using ice or a cold pack and anytime you are sitting or lying down. Try to keep the area at or above the level of your heart to help reduce swelling.



- Gently massage or rub the area to help reduce pain and encourage blood flow to the area. Do not massage the bruised area if it causes pain.

When should I call my doctor?

Call your doctor if you any of the following happens during home treatment:

- You get a bruise that lasts longer than 2 weeks
- You have signs of developing a skin infection, such as:
 - Increased pain in the area
 - Swelling in the area
 - Warmth in the area
 - Redness around the area
 - Red streaks leading from the area
 - Pus (thick white, yellow, or green fluid leaking around the area)
 - Fever higher than 100.3° F

When should I contact my anticoagulation provider?

It is important to contact your anticoagulation provider if you are bruising more than usual. They may want to do a blood test or to find out if there have been any other changes in your health. Please call the Anticoagulation Clinic at **(734) 998-6944** if you have any questions.

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