

Guide for Health Care Professionals  
on the risks associated to Normosang<sup>®</sup>, Human hemin, administration  
(thrombosis, extravasation and necrosis) and  
the precautions to take in order to avoid them

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## **PREVENTION**

Although it is recognized that extravasation, thrombosis and necrosis are the conditions associated with the intravenous administration of medications, the risk must be proactively managed with the aim of preventing an incident.

### ***Awareness of Risk Factors***

The risk is increased in the following cases:

- Elderly patients can be more at risk due to:
  - Interference with the cannula when the patient is confused or agitated.
  - Reduced pain sensation.
  - Fragile skin and veins.
- Patients suffering from decreased sensation or circulation.
- Inadequate visibility of the cannula and surrounding tissue.
- Central venous access devices (CVADs).

Therefore, additional vigilance is required.

#### **Porphyria patients may have additional risk due to:**

- Fragile, mobile veins which are difficult to cannulate.
- Repeated venipunctures or cannula sites due to previous treatments.

Risk factors for thromboembolic events are:

- Age  $\geq$  40 years
- Obesity
- History of venous thromboembolism
- Cancer
- Bed rest  $\geq$  5 days
- Major surgery

## **MANAGEMENT OF THE RISKS**

Since Normosang® is potentially irritating to tissues; it should be administered carefully as it is indicated in the Normosang® SmPC (see section 4.2. Posology and method of administration; 4.4. Special warnings and precautions for use).

## **MANAGEMENT OF EXTRAVASATION**

If an extravasation is suspected, treatment must begin as soon as possible.

Early detection and starting treatment within 24 hours can significantly reduce tissue damage.

### **Procedure for the IMMEDIATE management of peripheral extravasation**

1. Stop and disconnect the infusion immediately. DO NOT remove the cannula. Cap off the syringe on the giving set.
2. Explain to the patient what you suspect has happened and the procedure to deal with it.
3. Leave the cannula/ needle in place and try to aspirate as much of the drug as possible from the cannula with a 10ml luer lock syringe. Try to draw blood from the cannula.
4. Mark around the affected area with an indelible pen.
5. Remove the cannula/needle.
6. DO NOT apply direct manual pressure to suspected extravasation site.
7. Place a piece of dry gauze on the affected skin.
8. Apply cold compress to affected area for 20 to 30 minutes. Apply the compress firmly, but without undue pressure.
9. Repeat cold compress four times daily for 24 – 48 hours.
10. Use hydrocortisone cream 1% if local inflammation occurs.
11. Administer pain relief (if required) as prescribed.
12. Encourage patient to move limb and elevate for 48 hours.
13. Arrange follow up out-patient/in-patient appointment for the patient and document in the notes.

### **Procedure for the IMMEDIATE management of extravasation via a central venous access device (CVAD)**

1. Stop and disconnect the infusion immediately. DO NOT remove the central venous catheter (central line), PICC line or portacath. Cap off the syringe on the giving set.
2. Explain to the patient what you suspect has happened and the procedure to deal with it.
3. Leave the CVAD in place and try to aspirate as much of the drug as possible from the cannula with a 10ml luer lock syringe. Try to draw blood through the CVAD.
4. Mark around the affected area with an indelible pen.
5. DO NOT apply direct manual pressure to suspected extravasation site.
6. Place a piece of dry gauze on the affected skin.
7. Apply cold compress to affected area for 20 to 30 minutes. Apply the compress firmly, but without undue pressure.
8. Repeat cold compress four times daily for 24 – 48 hours.
9. Use hydrocortisone cream 1% if local inflammation occurs.
10. Administer pain relief (if required) against a valid signed prescription.
11. Arrange for line removal.
12. Encourage patient to move limb and elevate for 48 hours.
13. Arrange follow up out-patient/in-patient appointment for the patient and document in notes. All patients with CVAD extravasations must return for assessment of the affected area within 48 hours following the extravasation.

### **MANAGEMENT OF THROMBOSIS, NECROSIS**

Management of thrombosis and necrosis should be performed after thorough clinical evaluation by the treating physicians. The general therapeutical principles for these conditions should be applied, taking into account the specific patients' condition and following the prescription of safe porphyria medications. The list of safe drugs in porphyria could be found at:

[www.cardiff-porphyria.org](http://www.cardiff-porphyria.org)

[www.drugs-porphyria.org](http://www.drugs-porphyria.org)

**All cases of extravasation, thrombosis or necrosis with human hemin (Normosang®) should be reported to Recordati Rare Diseases Pharmacovigilance department at:**

**[RRDPharmacovigilance@recordati.com](mailto:RRDPharmacovigilance@recordati.com)**

Pharmacovigilance Department

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Suspected Adverse Drug Reactions (side effects) or medication errors may be reported using the Medicines Authority ADR reporting form, which is available online at <http://www.medicinesauthority.gov.mt/adrportal>, and sent by post or email to;

P: Pharmacovigilance Section at Post-Licensing Directorate, Medicines Authority, Sir Temi Żammit Buildings, Malta Life Sciences Park, San Ġwann SĠN 3000

E: [postlicensing.medicinesauthority@gov.mt](mailto:postlicensing.medicinesauthority@gov.mt)

Alternatively report to the local representative of Recordati Rare Disease: V.J. Salomone Pharma Ltd., Pharmacovigilance line on +356 99644126.

By reporting side effects, you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.

## References

1. Anderson F, Spencer F. Risk Factors for Venous Thromboembolism. *Circulation* 2003;107:I-9–I-16.
2. Schulmeister L. Extravasation. *The MASCC Textbook of Cancer Supportive Care and Survivorship*: 2011 Chapter 34; 351-359
3. The National Extravasation Information Service, [www.extravasation.org](http://www.extravasation.org), accessed February 2011.
4. Bertelli G. Prevention and Management of Extravasation of Cytotoxic Drugs. *Drug Safety* 1995; 12(4): 245-255
5. Management of Extravasation Policy NHS Greater Manchester & Cheshire Cancer Network, September 2011
6. NHS Tayside Extravasation Policy for All Drugs, Chemotherapy and Non-Chemotherapy June 2008
7. Summary of Product Characteristics and Package Leaflet for Normosang® (Current applicable versions). Recordati Rare Diseases.