

What to expect after your child has had sclerotherapy treatment for a lymphatic malformation

Information for patients

Immediately following the procedure

If your child had a general anaesthetic (asleep):

After the procedure, because your child has had a general anaesthetic we need to keep them in hospital for observation - usually until they can eat and drink - this can be up to 4 hours. After this your child will still feel a bit drowsy from the anaesthetic.

If your child was awake:

After your child first awake procedure we ask you to stay in the imaging department for 30 minutes and then you can leave and carry on with your day. If they have further treatments, you will be able to leave straight after those - we just need to observe your child for 30 minutes the first time. There is no drowsiness after the treatment because they haven't had a general anaesthetic.

General advice after going home

Pain and other side effects that your child might experience

After the sclerotherapy treatment, it is normal for the area treated to become swollen and feel tight, but it may also be slightly more tender than usual. The swelling usually lasts for a few days but could last up to two weeks. Taking children's pain medicine (paracetamol or ibuprofen) for the first few days after the treatment will help with any discomfort.

Sometimes after the sclerotherapy treatment, your child's urine can become dark in the first few hours. This is the medicine being cleared out of the blood via the kidneys. If your child does experience this dark urine, it is important that they drink plenty of water for 48 hours after the procedure.

Very rarely, the skin could break down (e.g. If it bleeds or if the tissue underneath is exposed). If this happens, go to your local hospital: a member of the plastic surgery team will need to look at it and put on a special dressing.

When can I take the dressing off?

The dressing/plaster can be removed after about 24 hours.

If it is possible to do so, we will tightly bandage the area after the lymphatic malformation has been treated. The dressing/bandage can be removed after about 24 hours. If your child usually wears a compression garment, they should put this on when the dressing we have applied is removed.

When can they resume normal activities?

Your child should rest for two days after treatment, if this is possible. After this time it is then important to mobilise as much as possible - slowly returning to normal activities and exercise over 1-2 weeks.

Longer term advice

While the initial swelling after treatment usually resolves after about 2 weeks the longer term benefit, of an overall reduction in size, may not show until a few months after the treatment and it may require a full course of treatment (usually 3 treatments) to show an improvement.

