

Venepuncture (taking blood for testing) is a procedure that may cause bleeding, discomfort, swelling or bruising.

Some people bruise easily after blood tests. Certain medications or medical conditions may predispose some people to bruising.

The SA Pathology collection staff are trained in minimising any problems associated with venepuncture.

A bruise may occur during venepuncture should the needle pass completely through a vein or only partially puncture a vein. Purple coloured bruising may develop or skin around the venepuncture site may swell (haematoma). This occurs more often in elderly or frail patients or those with veins that are difficult to access.

By following these instructions you will minimise any bruising, swelling or discomfort that may occur.

After blood collection

After taking your blood, the collector will ask you to apply moderate pressure with your fingertips to the site for a few minutes. In warmer weather you may need to place pressure on the site for slightly longer.

Keep the dressing in place for 30 minutes to an hour.

For the rest of the day

- Do not lift or carry heavy objects (e.g. parcels/handbag/briefcase)
- Avoid tight or restrictive clothing above or around the puncture site
- Avoid strenuous use of your arm (e.g. playing sports, digging or ironing).

If bleeding occurs

- Apply firm pressure with your fingers directly over the needle site and elevate your arm until bleeding stops.
- If you have swelling or discomfort, elevate your arm and place ice or a cold pack over the site for 10 minutes. Let the arm return to normal temperature and reapply the ice/cold pack for another 10 minutes.
- Rest the arm as much as possible throughout the rest of the day.

If you experience any swelling or extensive bruising, please seek medical advice or contact SA Pathology phone Enquiries on (08) 8222 3000.

