

### WHAT IS VENESECTION?

Venesection (also called therapeutic blood removal or therapeutic phlebotomy) is a procedure where a small amount of blood is removed from your vein, similar to a blood donation. This helps lower the number of red blood cells or iron in your body. It is commonly used to manage:

- Haemochromatosis (too much iron in the body)
- Polycythaemia vera (too many red blood cells)

### WHY DO I NEED THIS PROCEDURE?

#### Venesection helps:

- Reduce iron levels in the body
- Improve blood flow by thinning the blood
- Prevent long-term complications such as liver damage, heart problems, or blood clots.

### WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE PROCEDURE?

- You will be seated or lying down
- A nurse or doctor inserts a needle into a vein in your arm
- Around 350–500ml of blood is removed (similar to a blood donation)
- The procedure takes about 15–30 minutes depending on many factors
- A band-aid/dressing is applied to your arm afterwards.

### HOW TO PREPARE

- Eat and drink normally before your appointment (do not fast)
- Drink plenty of water (2–3 glasses) beforehand
- Avoid alcohol for 24 hours before and after
- Take your usual medications unless advised otherwise.

### AFTER THE PROCEDURE

- Wait in the waiting room for 5-10 mins after procedure
- You may feel tired or lightheaded — this is normal
- Rest for the day and avoid heavy exercise/lifting.
- Drink plenty of fluids and have a good meal
- Keep your band-aid/dressing on for at least 2 hours
- You may notice a small bruise at the needle site

### POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

Most people tolerate venesection well. Sometimes, you may experience:

- Dizziness or fainting
- Bruising at the needle site
- Mild fatigue for 24–48 hours.

Rare complications include infection at the needle site or excessive bleeding.

### WHEN TO SEEK HELP

Call your doctor or go to the nearest emergency department if you notice:

- Persistent dizziness, fainting, or chest pain
- Excessive bleeding that does not stop
- Redness, swelling, heat or pus at the needle site.

### FOLLOW-UP CARE

- Your doctor will tell you how often you need venesection
- At first, you may need it weekly, later less often
- Regular blood tests will monitor your progress.

### OUR LOCATION

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### REFERENCES

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2. Better Health Channel (Victoria State Government) – Venesection. Available at [www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au)
3. British Society for Haematology – Guidelines on the management of polycythaemia vera and haemochromatosis.