All about peritonitis and exit site care for people using CAPD and APD

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Introduction
This information leaflet provides advice and reminders for people already on continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis (CAPD) and automated peritoneal dialysis (APD). It covers:

- Peritonitis
- Peritoneal dialysis (PD) catheter exit site care
- Contact details

Peritonitis
CAPD peritonitis is inflammation of the peritoneum caused by infection. It is important to treat CAPD peritonitis immediately to prevent you from developing sepsis and to prevent the removal of your PD catheter.

What are the signs and symptoms of peritonitis?
Symptoms include:
- Cloudy fluid
- Tummy pain
- Feeling sick and vomiting
- High temperature/fever

What do I need to do?
- Contact your CAPD unit IMMEDIATELY. If this happens in the evening and the unit is closed, please contact the RAU team or the on-call renal registrar at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham (see contacts at the end of the leaflet). You will be advised to come to the hospital straight away. If you can’t get through straight away, keep trying
- Do not leave it untreated. Peritonitis will not go away, it will only get worse and may result in SEPSIS
How can I reduce the risk of getting peritonitis?

Thankfully, the rates of serious complications of peritonitis are not high, but it is important remain vigilant.

To reduce the risk the following steps must be taken:

• Always follow the CAPD/APD procedure as you have been taught
• Wash your hands and use hand gel at the correct times
• Keep your dialysis area/equipment clean and tidy
• Do not touch the connections, if you do, do not use contaminated bags/equipment
• Do not sneeze or cough over your connections
• Do not use a bag that is leaking
• Clean your exit site daily as you have been shown
• Seek treatment promptly if you suspect an exit site infection
• Report any contamination or line disconnection to your PD unit promptly

Useful tips

• Use a card/paper with writing on it, placed behind the drained out bag to check fluid is clear
• If you get tummy pain after an exchange or after finishing APD, don’t wait until you next dialyse, ring for advice
• When phoning at night, insist on coming up to the hospital, even if you are told to wait until the morning. Peritonitis can get worse within a few hours
• Remember to let your PD nurses know a few weeks before travelling so they can give you written information about what to do in the event of infection on holiday
• Keep windows closed and switch off fans whilst doing your dialysis
• Keep small children and pets away whilst doing your dialysis
PD catheter exit site

It is important to follow the instructions you have been given to reduce the risk of infection or trauma to the catheter exit site (where the PD tube comes out of the skin). This will also ensure the risk of developing peritonitis is reduced.

What are the signs and symptoms of exit site infection?

- Redness around the catheter exit site or along the catheter track
- Pain or discomfort around the catheter exit site
- Oozing or pus coming from the catheter exit site
- Swelling around the catheter exit site

What do I need to do?

- Contact the CAPD unit as soon as possible. If you notice it in the evening you can wait until the morning to phone
- Come up to the CAPD unit for the nurse to look at the exit site
- Do not clean your exit site as the nurse will take a swab to check if there is an infection
- Do not stop the anti-bacterial ointment
- You may need to start antibiotics

How can I reduce the risk of getting an exit site infection?

- Clean your exit site daily with anti-bacterial soap and sterile saline as you have been taught
- Dry your exit site with sterile gauze using as you have been shown
• Apply antibacterial ointment to the exit site using a clean piece of gauze
• Do not use flannels or sponges around the exit site as this can cause infection
• Always use new dressing/gauze/cleaning solution every time you re-dress your exit site

**Useful tips**

- Secure your catheter with tape
- If you like to go swimming, ask your PD nurse about an activity pouch
- **Do not** swim in the sea
- Leave the mepore dressing on when showering then clean the exit site afterwards as you have been shown
- It is not advisable to have a bath. Having a shower with clean running water is better
Useful numbers

- **CAPD Unit** (9am–5pm Monday–Friday)
  Telephone: 0121 371 8720/8719

- **Hospital Switchboard**
  Telephone: 0121 371 2000

- **Renal Assessment Unit**
  Telephone: 0121 371 3017.
  Available 08.00–20.00 Monday–Friday
  08.00–16.00 Saturday and Sunday

- Outside of these hours the on-call renal registrar can be contacted by ringing the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham switchboard on 0121 371 2000
Please use the space below to write down any questions you may have and bring this with you to your next appointment.

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The Trust provides free monthly health talks on a variety of medical conditions and treatments. For more information visit www.uhb.nhs.uk/health-talks.htm