



Caring for your Haemodialysis Catheter

Introduction

This leaflet provides information and simple instructions on how you can help us to care for your haemodialysis catheter.

Why is it important to look after my haemodialysis catheter?

It is important for you to look after your haemodialysis catheter by following the care instructions as this will reduce the risk of your catheter becoming infected or blocked.

What can I do?

We ask that you take the following steps:

- Do not let any staff routinely use your haemodialysis catheter for any purpose except dialysis. In exceptional cases your catheter may be used to obtain blood or give medications into.
- Keep the protective dressing on at all times. If the dressing comes off you will need to contact your renal unit and arrange to come in to have the catheter exit site cleaned and another dressing applied. Please do not remove or change the dressing yourself.
- Keep the gauze cover over the catheter bungs and plastic tubing.
- Take shallow baths and avoid getting the catheter wet.
- Never remove the bungs from the ends of the haemodialysis catheter as this may lead to bleeding from the catheter or allow air to be sucked in.
- Do not pull or tug on your catheter.
- Contact your Renal Unit or Renal Access Team on 0121 4224 1068, or ward 3 if out of hours, if you experience any soreness or oozing from your haemodialysis catheter exit site. This may be a sign of infection.
- Please remind anyone who uses your haemodialysis catheter to clean their hands and put on a pair of sterile gloves before handling it. Staff will not mind being reminded of the importance of hand washing.

What are the signs of an infection?

The following signs may indicate an infection:

- Feeling hot and having a temperature above normal

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- Feeling shivery or generally unwell
- Redness, swelling or oozing around the haemodialysis catheter exit site
- Pain or discomfort

If you experience any of these please contact your local dialysis unit.

When will my dressing be changed?

To reduce the risk of infection, the haemodialysis catheter exit site and catheter tubing needs to be kept clean and dry. The clear, plastic dressing on the catheter exit site can remain in place for up to 7 days.

Each time you come for your dialysis session a nurse will take your temperature and inspect the catheter exit site for any signs of infection. The catheter exit site will be cleaned and the clear plastic dressing changed weekly. However, the dressing will need to be replaced more frequently if it has become loose, wet, dirty or dislodged.

If for any reason your catheter exit site is bleeding or oozing a dry gauze dressing will be applied. The gauze dressing will be changed at the beginning of each dialysis session and replaced with a clear, plastic dressing as soon as the bleeding has stopped.

What if.....?

- **The haemodialysis catheter breaks?** In the unlikely event that your catheter cracks or breaks, don't worry. Clamp, pinch or tie your catheter immediately above the break and contact the renal unit or ward 3. You will need to return to hospital to have it repaired or replaced.
- **The haemodialysis catheter falls out?** Lie down and apply firm pressure over the catheter exit site wound for 5-10 minutes to stop any bleeding. Contact the renal unit or ward 3.
- **I am allergic to the plastic dressing?** If your skin around the plastic dressing becomes sore, itchy and red please let the nurse looking after you know. An alternative dressing is available, but it will need to be changed at the beginning of every dialysis session.

Who should I contact?

If you have any problems or queries about your haemodialysis catheter please contact your dialysis unit during normal opening hours, Renal Access Team 0121 424 1068, or the main dialysis unit between, 07.00-midnight (Monday to Saturday). Outside these hours please contact Ward 3 on 0121 424 0203.

Renal PatientView (RPV)

Renal PatientView (RPV) is the UK renal community's pioneering project that gives patients rapid access to their results and information about their diagnosis and treatment, via a secure Internet login.

If you have access to the Internet you can try the system www.renalphatientview.org demo logins are available from the foot of the home page (limited; no TP status etc). For more information about the project please ask a member of the Renal Team.

Information for Patients

Our commitment to confidentiality

We keep personal and clinical information about you to ensure you receive appropriate care and treatment. Everyone working in the NHS has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential.

We will share information with other parts of the NHS to support your healthcare needs, and we will inform your GP of your progress unless you ask us not to. If we need to share information that identifies you with other organisations we will ask for your consent. You can help us by pointing out any information in your records which is wrong or needs updating.

Additional Sources of Information:

Go online and view NHS Choices website for more information about a wide range of health topics <http://www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx>

You may want to visit one of our Health Information Centres located in:

- Main Entrance at Birmingham Heartlands Hospital Tel: 0121 424 2280
 - Treatment Centre at Good Hope Hospital Tel: 0121 424 9946
 - Clinic Entrance Solihull Hospital Tel: 0121 424 5616
- or contact us by email: healthinfo.centre@heartofengland.nhs.uk.

Dear Patient

We welcome your views on what you thought of this patient information leaflet, also any suggestions on how you feel we can improve through our feedback link below:

- Patient Information Feedback email: patientinformationleafletfeedback@heartofengland.nhs.uk

If you wish to make any other comments this can be done through the links listed below:

- Patient Opinion: www.patientopinion.org.uk
- I want great care: www.iwantgreatcare.org (Here you can leave feedback about your doctor)

Be helpful and respectful: think about what people might want to know about our patient information and this hospital and how your experiences might benefit others. Remember your words must be polite and respectful, and you cannot name individuals on the sites.

If you have any questions you may want to ask about your condition or your treatment or if there is anything you do not understand and you wish to know more about please write them down and your doctor will be more than happy to try and answer them for you.