

Looking after your tunnelled haemodialysis catheter at home

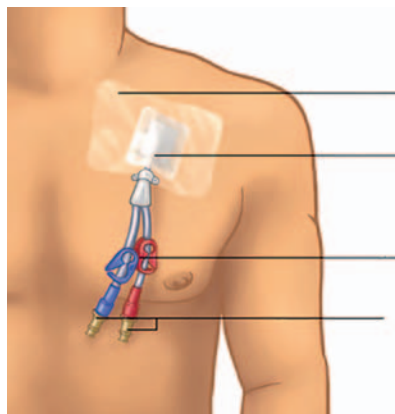
Barnsley



Information for patients, families and carers Sheffield Kidney Institute (Renal Unit)

We have written this leaflet to explain how you should look after your tunnelled haemodialysis catheter (HDC). Following these instructions will help stop problems developing in the future, such as infection. Some of these problems can be very serious, such as air entering the body (called an air embolism), so it is very important you know how to look after your HDC.

This picture shows the parts of the HDC you can see and what they do



Sterile dressing covering the exit site - to help stop infection

Blue and red clamps - to stop the risk of blood leaks and air embolism

Bungs - to also stop air entering, blood leaks and help stop infections

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How do I look after my HDC?

- Both the red and blue clamps must be closed at all times.** Never open the clamps.
- The bungs on the end of the red and blue line must be in place and tightly secured at all times.** Check that the clamps are closed and both bungs are tightly secured regularly during the day. This is especially important after getting dressed or undressed and showering or bathing. This is when the clamps and bungs can work loose.
- Check your dressing is in place at all times.** You do not have to clean the exit site yourself; your nurse will do this when you come for your dialysis treatment. Do your best to keep the dressing clean and dry.
- Protect your HDC from damage.** Don't use sharp objects (like scissors or pins, for example) near the HDC.
- You or anyone handling your HDC must wash their hands first.** Don't allow a doctor or nurse to touch your catheter unless they are wearing sterile gloves. The ends of the red and blue lines should only be handled using sterile gauze.
- Don't let a nurse or doctor take blood or give medication through your line** except in an emergency or after talking to staff on the renal unit.

What do I do if something goes wrong at home?

1. **If you notice a red or blue clamp is open.** Wash your hands and carefully close the clamp. Make sure the clamp is pinching the line closed. Get someone to help you if you find it difficult to see your HDC. Tell your nurse this has happened when you next come for dialysis. If you can't get the clamps to close, ring the renal unit straight away.
2. **If you notice a bung is missing.** Wash your hands. Replace the bung; you will find new bungs in the pack you were given with this leaflet. Ring the Renal Unit straight away; you may need to come to the unit to have antibiotic treatment. The telephone numbers are at the end of this leaflet.
3. **If your dressing works loose or comes off.** Wash your hands and replace with the new dressing that is in the pack you were given with this leaflet.
4. **If you notice a split or break in your HDC.** Ring the Renal Unit straight away; you may need to come to the unit to have antibiotic treatment and the HDC replaced. The telephone numbers are at the end of this leaflet.
5. **If you notice any signs of infection,** such as fever (raised temperature), redness or oozing from the HDC exit site, ring the Renal Unit straight away.

What to do if:

- Your HDC falls out
- Your HDC leaks blood
- You think air has entered your body through your line

This is an emergency

1. Make sure both the blue and red clamps are closed
2. If a bung has become loose or undone replace straight away
3. **Ring 999 for an ambulance straight away**
4. **Lie down on your left side with your head down and feet raised**
5. When medical help arrives tell them you are a haemodialysis patient and you think air has got into your body through your line.

The ambulance will take you to the nearest Emergency Department for urgent care and the Renal Unit will be contacted for advice.

How to contact the Renal Unit:

Barnsley Dialysis Unit: **01226 434 910** Monday - Saturday: 7.00am - 9.00pm

Any other time telephone:

Renal Ward (Northern General Hospital) **0114 226 6391** or **0114 271 5886**

Alternative formats can be available on request. Email: sth.alternativeformats@nhs.net

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