

The Facts

- The catheter tip sits inside the heart.
- A catheter creates a higher risk for infection than a fistula or graft.
- A catheter creates a higher risk for emergency care for problems like bleeding or blood clots.
- A catheter may need to be replaced if it stops working properly.
- A catheter is not considered a permanent access.

References

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 6 Tips to prevent dialysis infections. www.cdc.gov/dialysis/patient

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC approach to BSI prevention in dialysis facilities. <http://www.cdc.gov/dialysis>



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*To file a grievance, please contact
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YOUR DIALYSIS CATHETER

What You Need to Know



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WHAT TO DO

If Your Dressing Gets Loose, Falls Off, Gets Wet or Soiled

- **Do not remove or change** the dressing unless directed by the dialysis clinic or your doctor.
- Be prepared. Keep clean gloves, a mask, a clean bandage or sterile dressing and medical tape (silk, paper, or transparent) at home.

If Dressing is Loose*

1. Perform hand hygiene for 20 seconds using soap and water or hand sanitizer.
2. Put on a mask and gloves.
3. Place a bandage or sterile gauze **over** the loose dressing. Secure with medical tape (silk, paper, or transparent).

If Dressing Falls Off*

1. Perform hand hygiene for 20 seconds using soap and water or hand sanitizer.
2. Put on a mask and gloves.
3. Check chest area for any sign of infection (swelling, change in color of the skin, new or increased drainage, tenderness, warmth or odor).
4. Check for bulging neck veins, dry skin, rash, irritation or any new discomfort at the site.

5. Check to see if the length of your catheter from the insertion site has changed.
6. Check for bleeding.
7. Place a new, clean bandage or sterile gauze **over** the existing dressing if still attached or over the catheter if the dressing has fallen off. Secure with medical tape (silk, paper or transparent).
8. **Go to or call your dialysis center** as soon as possible. If the dialysis clinic is closed, **call your kidney doctor**.

If Dressing is Wet or Soiled*

1. **Do not remove the dressing.**
2. Check for bleeding. **Note:** There may be some oozing of blood from the site for several days after a CVC is placed in your body. If there is a lot of blood, or if the site keeps bleeding, **call your kidney doctor**.
3. **Go to or call your dialysis center** as soon as possible.
4. **Call your kidney doctor's office** if the dialysis center is closed.

**If alternate instructions have been provided for your particular catheter, refer to those directions and instructions.*

GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM

- If you experience chest pain, shortness of breath, or facial swelling
- If you see bulging veins in your neck, upper chest or arms
- If your catheter falls out
- If you have a fever

PREVENTING INFECTION

- Dressing must stay clean and dry.
- Do not shower or swim unless approved by your nephrologist.
- Do not submerge the catheter or catheter site in water.
- Wash or sanitize your hands often throughout the day and before and after dialysis.
- Speak up. Make sure the health care team washes or sanitizes their hands and wears a mask and gloves before touching your catheter.
- After dialysis, make sure the health care team removes all traces of blood from the ends of the catheter before the caps are put on.
- Keep the caps and clamps closed tightly; do not open yourself, only the dialysis team should touch or adjust the caps and clamps.