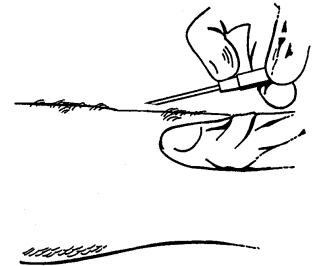


Your Peripheral Catheter for Home IV Therapy

Your prescriber has recommended intravenous medications as part of your treatment.

To give you these intravenous medications (also called infusions) the nurses or pharmacist visiting you will insert a device called an intravenous (or IV) catheter.

An IV catheter is a small, short flexible tube that is inserted into a vein in your hand or arm.



Important Points About Your Catheter

- Your catheter will be inserted by a home care nurse with education and experience in placing these devices. Proper infection control procedures will be followed to prevent infection.
- Your catheter will stay in place, typically, for the duration of the therapy or until a complication occurs before it is removed and replaced with a new one. Your nurse will change the dressing at least once every week and look at the infusion site where the catheter enters the vein. If the dressing becomes moist, wet, or unattached to the skin, it must be changed immediately to prevent an infection.
- You may be taught by your home care nurse to insert medications through the catheter and to care for the catheter in different ways. This is standard procedure for many patients. Always ask questions if you are uncertain about any of the procedures or information.
- You will be taught to monitor (look at and feel) your catheter regularly to make sure complications are not developing. Your nurse will tell you how frequently to do this, but it is usually every four hours during waking hours.
- You will be taught the signs of complications that you should report to your nurse or prescriber.
- If properly dressed and secured, your catheter should not “fall out”. A stabilization device and/or a piece of sterile tape may be visible and keep the catheter from moving. You can engage in typical activities as long as the dressing stays intact, secure, and dry.

- If properly used and maintained (“flushed”) your catheter should not clot or clog. Notify your home care nurse if the catheter becomes “sluggish” or difficult to use during your medication infusion. Another way to check for catheter function is to time the infusions. If it begins to take longer for the medicine to go in, you would want to mention that to your nurse.

Signs or Symptoms to Report to Your Nurse or Pharmacist

- Pain or tenderness around your catheter
- Pain or tenderness when your infusion begins
- Puffiness or swelling around your catheter or anywhere on your arm
- Redness or drainage around your catheter
- Fever
- Clotting, clogging, or “sluggish” infusion through the catheter
- Bleeding
- Leaking of medication from the catheter site
- Numbness or tingling in the hand or arm



Notes and Instructions

- Frequent hand washing can help prevent infections.
- Avoid movement of the catheter at any time.
- Always clean the needle-free access device with an alcohol pad before attaching the IV administration tubing.
- Avoid getting the catheter or dressing wet.
- Avoid tub bath.