

+ Tips to Thrive

Caring for Your Central Venous Catheter

The best care for your central venous catheter starts with you! These everyday tips can help.

WASH YOUR HANDS

This is the most effective way to eliminate bacteria and decrease chances of exposure.

SCRUB THE HUB

Scrubbing the hub of the catheter cap with alcohol for at least 15 seconds can help kill bacteria — no matter what type of cap or connection.

KEEP IT SAFE AND SECURE

Keeping your line anchored close to the dressing and exit site can help prevent tension on the line while infusing. Special devices and tapes are available to help stabilize the catheter against the skin. Always keep lines away from wound and ostomy sites.

KEEP IT DRY

Keeping the site clean and dry is important. A moist central venous catheter site is a breeding ground for bacteria. This can lead to a catheter-related bloodstream infection. Be sure to keep the dressing, cap, and external catheter dry and protected. Change your dressing if it gets wet. When in doubt, change your dressing and cap. Schedule dressing changes after bathing, exercising, or swimming for best results.

LISTEN TO YOUR BODY

Learn to recognize your body's signs of an infection. Take your temperature daily to make sure you don't have a fever. If you have a fever, assume it is a line infection unless tests show otherwise. Contact your physician and home care nurse if you have a fever over 100.5 degrees. Get plenty of rest so your immune system is at its best.

BE THE GUARDIAN OF YOUR CATHETER

Limit the number of people who manipulate your line. Only allow those you trust to touch your line, dressing, or cap. It's okay to ask to do your own line care in the hospital too.

REMEMBER

Routine and thorough central venous catheter care is the most important step you can take to protect yourself.



Learn more.

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