

## **Long-term Hemodialysis Catheter Education Plan**

### **Getting Ready to Learn about a Long-Term Hemodialysis Catheter**

Learning something new can be hard. It is even harder if you are not feeling well. The purpose of this education plan is for you and the staff to review the following information together. Here are some good things to tell the staff:

- Who you want to learn with you. We would like to have someone who will be helping you at home learn with you.
- The best way for you to learn. Do you learn best by reading a book or pamphlet or by doing things yourself?
- If I you are not feeling well, if you are in pain or you cannot focus on learning right now.

This information is important to your health. We may explain something more than once. We will be giving you information in small bits over several days. If there is something you don't understand **it's OK to ask** us to explain.

### **What I need to learn about a dialysis catheter**

By the time I leave the hospital, I will be able to tell the staff:

- What a dialysis catheter is
- The purpose of each part of the dialysis catheter and the dressing
- How my dialysis catheter should be cared for at home
- What signs to look for if there is something wrong with my dialysis catheter and what to do about it
- Who will be caring for my dialysis catheter when I leave the hospital

**The staff will use three questions and answers to teach me about my dialysis catheter:**

- What is my main problem?
- What do I need to do?
- Why is this important to me?

The staff will ask me to repeat back important points in my own words, or ask me to show them what I have learned. They want to make sure that I know about my dialysis catheter and what to do if I have problems.

**What is my main problem?**

When kidneys are healthy, they clean the blood. When kidneys fail, treatment is needed to replace the work that the kidneys used to do. This treatment is called dialysis. Dialysis filters blood to get rid of harmful wastes. I need to have dialysis. In order to do this, I will have a special tube inserted. This tube will be used to do dialysis. I need to know what a dialysis catheter is, how to care for my dialysis catheter at home, and how to watch for complications at home.

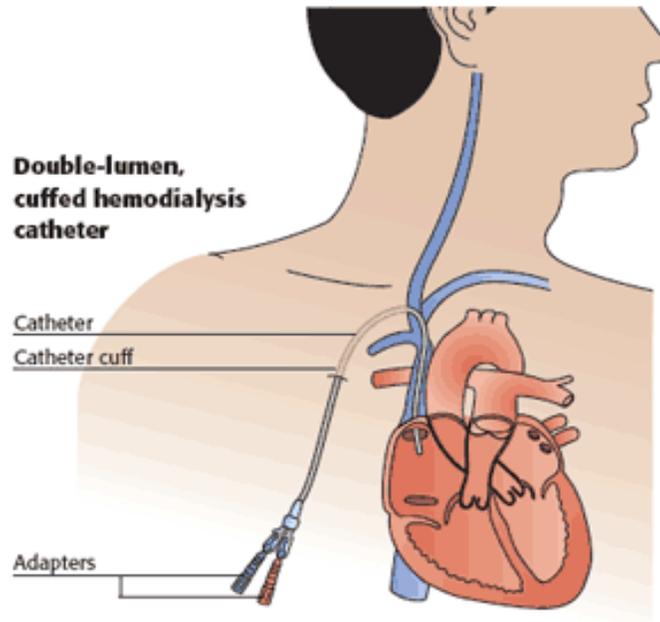
**What do I need to do?**

I need to understand what a dialysis catheter is

- A dialysis catheter is a special tube inserted so I can receive dialysis.
- This tube is to be used **only** for dialysis.
- The tube is inserted into a large vein, either in my neck, chest, or, groin. This can be done by a doctor in the operating room or in the radiology department.
- There are 2 sites the doctor uses to put the dialysis catheter in. The first is a small cut near my shoulder call the *insertion* site. The doctor puts the catheter in the vein at this site. This spot should heal within a few weeks. The second site is below the first. This is where the catheter comes out of the skin. This site is called the *exit* site. The dialysis catheter is under the skin between these two spots.
- Near the spot where the dialysis catheter comes out of the skin is something called a Dacron cuff. This cuff lies under the skin.

If I could see the cuff it would look like a piece of felt wrapped around the catheter. Skin will grow around the cuff in about 6 weeks. The cuff helps hold the dialysis catheter in place. It also keeps germs from moving up the catheter into the blood.

- My dialysis catheter will stay in place until my doctor feels it needs to be changed or removed.



Source:

<http://kidney.niddk.nih.gov/kudiseases/pubs/vascularaccess/index.aspx#venouscatheter>

I need to understand the purpose of each part of the dialysis catheter and the dressing.

Dressings

- A clean dry dressing must always cover the area where the tube goes into the skin. This helps to prevent infection.

Caps

- The caps prevent air and germs from entering the tube. I should not remove the caps.
- The caps are located at the end of the dialysis catheter tubes. This is where the catheter connects to the dialysis machine.

### Clamps

- Clamps are near the end of the tube. These clamps may be used to stop fluid or air from getting inside the catheter. I should not open the clamps.

### How my catheter should be cared for at home

- Anyone working with my dialysis catheter should wash his or her hands with soap and water.
- I should not take a shower until my doctor tells me that I can. When I do shower I should cover the dressing with plastic so it doesn't get wet.
- If I wash my hair I should do so just before going to dialysis. If the dressing gets wet they will be able to change it then.
- I must be careful not to pull or tug on my catheter.
- I should not use scissors near my catheter. This can damage my catheter.

### Dressings:

- A clean, dry dressing must always cover the area where the catheter enters my skin.
- The dialysis nurse will change my dressing at least once a week.
- If the dressing gets wet or is loose I should call the dialysis center. They should change the dressing for me.
- If the dressing is loose I should secure it with tape until it can be changed.
- When the dressing is off, the skin around the tube should not be touched with bare hands.

### Keeping the dialysis catheter open:

- The dialysis nurse places Heparin, a blood thinner, in my catheter after dialysis is done.
- The Heparin stays in the catheter until my next dialysis.

### Changing the caps:

- The dialysis nurses will change the caps on my catheter.

I will be able to tell the staff what I need to look for if there is something wrong with my dialysis catheter and what I should do about it.

### Bleeding

- It is normal to have a small amount of bleeding right after the dialysis catheter is put in.
- I should watch for bleeding bigger than the size of a quarter.
- I should watch for swelling or pain around the catheter. This could mean there is bleeding under the skin.
- If bleeding happens, I should push firmly with my fingers at the site over the dressing for 15 minutes. If the bleeding doesn't stop, I should call my doctor or dialysis nurse.
- I should call my doctor or nurse if I see swelling or have pain at my catheter site.

### Infection

- Infection is when germs get into either the blood or into the area where the dialysis catheter goes into the skin.
- Signs of infection are
  - Redness at site
  - Pain or tenderness at site
  - Drainage at site
  - Fever
  - Chills
- I should call my doctor or dialysis nurse if I have signs of infection.
- I can help prevent infection by:
  - Not touching my skin near the catheter
  - Keeping the dressing dry
- The staff can prevent infection by:
  - Changing the dressing weekly
  - Good hand washing
  - Not touching the skin near the catheter
  - Changing the caps at least weekly
  - Cleaning the ends of the catheter with a cleansing swab

### Catheter movement

- If the dialysis catheter is tugged on it could slide out of the skin.
- The end of the catheter may be in the wrong place if it is tugged on.
- If the catheter is pulled on I might be able to see the cuff sticking out (it looks like felt wrapped around the catheter). If this happens I should contact my doctor or dialysis nurse.
- I should be careful not to tug on the catheter. I should be careful not to get the catheter caught on anything.
- If I think that the catheter has slid out I should not try to push it back in.

### Plugged dialysis catheter

- A blood clot or blood product can cause the tube to plug.
- If the tube is plugged, I will not get a good dialysis treatment.
- The dialysis machine will alarm if I am not getting a good treatment.
- The dialysis nurse will know if my dialysis catheter is plugged.
- Sometimes a special medicine can be put into my dialysis catheter to unplug it.

### Blood Clot

- Sometimes a blood clot can block the flow of blood in the vein.
- A blood clot can cause pain or swelling in my arm, shoulder, chest or back.
- I should call my doctor if I have any signs of a blood clot.

### Tears or Breaks in the dialysis catheter

- The tube is soft and can stretch. Stretching the tube can cause tears or breaks in the catheter.
- If there is a tear or break I may see fluid leaking from the tubing where the tear or break is.
- If I notice a tear or break I should fold the tube over on itself and tape it down. I should make sure the fold is between the break and my skin.
- I should wrap the fold in an antiseptic pad then wrap it in gauze.
- I should call my doctor immediately if this happens.

- To prevent tears and breaks I should make sure the dressing is always stuck on well and tape the tube to my skin.
- I should never use scissors near the tube.

#### Air in the bloodstream

- Air can get into the bloodstream if the tube is broken or if the caps are loose or missing. This is a very rare but serious problem.
- Signs of this are
  - Sudden shortness of breath
  - Dizziness
  - Chest pain
  - Cough
- If I have these signs I should quickly fold the tubing over on itself so that no more air can enter. I should then lie down on my left side with my hips higher than my shoulders. I should call or have someone call 911.

I will be able to tell the staff who will be caring for my dialysis catheter when I leave the hospital

- This may be:
  - Dialysis nurse in a dialysis center
  - Dr. \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Why is this important to me?**

- To keep complications from happening
- To know what to do if a complication is seen

As part of my care I have received this education plan.

**Personal Dialysis Information**

I have a \_\_\_\_\_ brand dialysis catheter

My catheter is threaded into my \_\_\_\_\_ vein

My catheter was inserted on \_\_\_\_\_

**If I have any questions or problems I may call the following**

\_\_\_\_\_ Dialysis center: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Physician: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Vascular Access Specialist Team (VAST) at Bronson. I will call the hospital operator @ (269) 341-7654 and ask them to page the VAST nurse. The VAST nurse is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Post this page in an easy to remember place such as on your refrigerator.

## Long-Term Hemodialysis Catheter Education Plan

### Resources for Staff

- Long-Term Hemodialysis Catheter Education Plan
- INS (Intravenous Nurse Society) Manual
- [Hemodialysis](#)- Nursing Reference Center Plus

### Teaching Tools

- Long-Term Hemodialysis Catheter Education Plan

### References

- INS (Intravenous Nurse Society) Manual
- [Hemodialysis](#)- Nursing Reference Center Plus

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**\* This page is intended for staff use only. Do not give to the patient. This document is not a part of the permanent medical record.**