

# The Central Venous Catheter

Information for Patients



In order to have regular haemodialysis treatment, dialysis staff requires access to your bloodstream. This is known as 'Vascular Access' and will require a surgical or specialised procedure.

### The three most common types of vascular access;

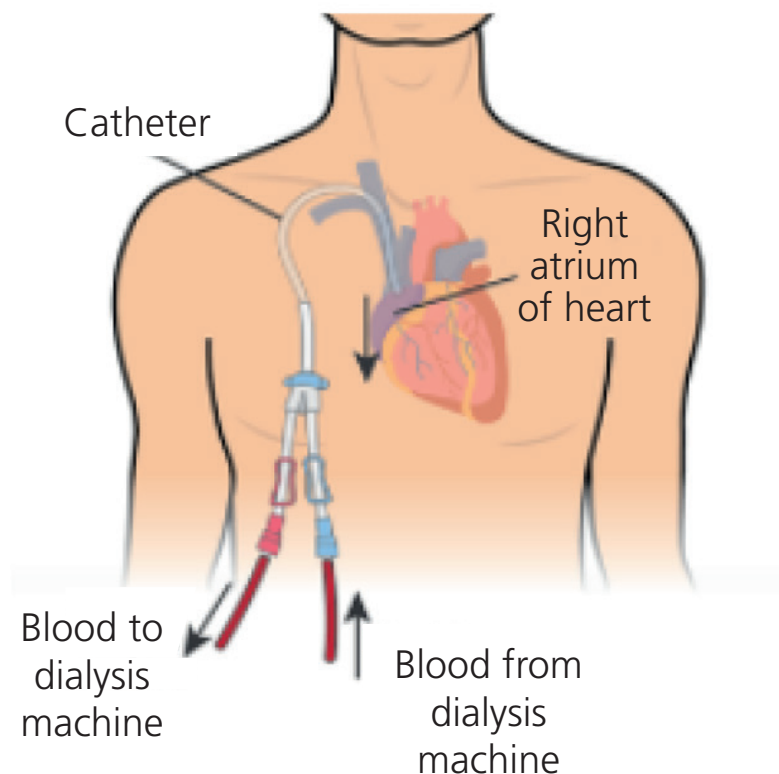
- ◆ Arteriovenous Fistula (AVF) - usually referred to as your 'Fistula'
- ◆ Arteriovenous Graft (AVG) - usually referred to as your 'Graft'
- ◆ Central Venous Catheter (CVC) - usually referred to as your 'Line'

### The Central Venous Catheter

The CVC is a soft flexible man made tube that is placed into a large vein, most usually in your chest. Occasionally it may be placed in a vein in the neck or groin. The CVC has two openings know as 'lumens' or 'ports'. During haemodialysis, the lumens are connected to the haemodialysis machine; one lumen takes blood from your body to be cleaned and the cleaned blood returns to your body through the other lumen. The point where the catheter goes through the skin is called the 'exit site'.

A CVC can be used while you are waiting for surgery for AVF or AVG formation or repair, it can also be used as a permanent method of vascular access if for some reason an AVF or AVG cannot be made.

There are two different types of CVC, tunnelled and non-tunnelled



## Tunnelled CVC

Tunnelled CVC's are inserted under X-Ray guidance in theatre and are usually located in the chest. They can be used long term, usually located in the chest. The CVC is held in place by stitches to the skin, the stitches may be removed once the catheter is firmly in place, depending on your Renal Units policy.



## Non Tunnelled CVC

Non Tunnelled CVC's are used short term and are usually located in your neck. If you have a non-tunnelled line, the stitches will need to remain in place for as long as you have the CVC.

## Important information about your CVC

- ◆ Keep the dressing in place at all times. This will be changed by the Dialysis Nurse at least once a week.
- ◆ During dressing changes and when your CVC is being connected/discinected, avoid breathing or coughing over your CVC to reduce the risk of germs entering the bloodstream.
- ◆ Avoid sharps objects near your CVC - shaving around the CVC if required can be done with extreme caution by the Dialysis Nurse. The Dialysis Nurse will **never** use scissors near your CVC.
- ◆ Avoid getting the dressing wet (avoid deep baths/swimming). Take care to keep it dry even when showering. Your hair should be washed over a sink to avoid getting the dressing wet.
- ◆ **Never** open the clamps or remove the end caps from the lumens. These prevent air and germs from entering the blood stream.
- ◆ Avoid pulling on the catheter.
- ◆ Sometimes CVC's can become blocked, and need medication inserted into the lumen to unblock it.
- ◆ At the end of each haemodialysis, a substance which will prevent infection and clotting is inserted by the dialysis nurse into the CVC lumen, this is called a 'line lock'.
- ◆ Only specially trained dialysis staff should do anything with your CVC except in an emergency. If you are admitted to Emergency Department (A&E), other medical staff may need to use the CVC to get blood samples or give medication, but they must be aware that there is a line lock in the lumen that needs to be removed before this can be done.

## Seek urgent medical advice should the following occur

- ♦ **CVC falls out** - In the unlikely event that this occurs, you should immediately apply pressure to the site to stop any bleeding. Contact your dialysis unit or renal ward for advice. **If unable to control the bleeding, this must be treated as an emergency by dialling 999.**
- ♦ **CVC dislodges, but does not fall out completely** - Immediately contact your renal ward. You will need to come to the department to have this rectified. **Never attempt to push the cvc back in as this could introduce infection or go into the wrong blood vessel.**
- ♦ **Bleeding from around the exit site** - Apply pressure to the exit site and contact your renal unit for advice. **If unable to control the bleeding, this must be treated as an emergency by dialling 999.**
- ♦ **CVC caps fall off or clamps break/tubing becomes cut/punctured between the clamp and the skin** - Immediately contact your renal unit or renal ward for advice. In the unlikely event that caps come off and clamps break at the same time, or if the tubing becomes cut or punctured between the clamp and the skin, to prevent air from entering the bloodstream, nip the tubing between the broken clamp or punctures/cut tubing and the skin. **This must be treated as an emergency by dialling 999.** You must lie on your left hand side with your feet up and head down until help arrives. This helps to prevent damage caused by air entering the bloodstream.
- ♦ **Infection** - Fevers, chills, sweats, painful, red or swollen exit site, generally unwell, discharge from exit site - this could indicate an infection and must be treated urgently, you may need intravenous antibiotics. Contact your renal unit/renal ward/NHS 111/GP urgently.
- ♦ **If your dressing becomes wet or displaced, exposing the exit site** - Phone your renal unit/renal ward for advice. You may be advised to attend to have your CVC redressed to prevent infection.

## CVC Removal

Once no longer required, your CVC will be removed. This is usually performed in the renal unit or renal ward by specially trained staff. This takes around 30 minutes and can be done as an outpatient with the minimum of discomfort.

## **Feedback**

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

## **Contact numbers**

### **Aintree Hospital**

**Tel: 0151 529 8800**

**Text phone number: 18001 0151 529 8800**

### **Aintree Hospital Ward 14**

**Tel: 0151 529 8825**

**Text phone number: 18001 0151 529 8825**

### **Broadgreen Dialysis Unit**

**Tel: 0151 282 6135**

**Text phone number: 18001 0151 282 6135**

### **Halton Dialysis Unit**

**Tel: 01928 706 900**

### **Royal Liverpool Hospital Ward 7b**

**Tel: 0151 706 2395**

**Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 2395**

### **Royal Liverpool Hospital Renal Dialysis Unit**

**Tel: 0151 706 3606**

**Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 3606**

**Southport Dialysis Unit**

**Tel: 01704 518 980**

**St Helens Dialysis Unit**

**Tel: 01744 610 970**

**Warrington Dialysis Unit**

**Tel: 01925 256 850**

**Warterloo Dialysis Unit**

**Tel: 0151 920 4280**

**Author: Clinical Nurse Specialist - Nephrology**

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**Liverpool University Hospitals**

**NHS Foundation Trust**

Prescot Street

Liverpool

L7 8XP

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