



Children's Community Nursing Team

Care of child receiving Home Central Venous Line/Portacath Intravenous Therapy

Information and guidelines for parents and carers

The aim of the fact sheet is to support you whilst your child is receiving Home Central Venous Line/Portacath Intravenous Therapy.

If you notice any of the following:

- redness; oozing or pus; swelling or complaints of pain around the central line / portacath site; a red line along the skin around the site – known as “tracking” inflammation.
- your child develops a rash; itching; flushed face; diarrhoea; vomiting; headaches or nausea
- your child has a high temperature (more than 38c.)

contact the Children's community Nurse.

If your child develops any of the following

- facial swelling
- noisy breathing
- wheezing
- difficulty in breathing
- severe shaking of the body

or if your child is difficult to rouse and unresponsive.

Dial 999 and tell the ambulance service that your child has received IV treatment at home.

After you have telephoned for an ambulance contact the Children's Community Nursing Team to inform them of the problem.

To avoid potential problems

- ensure that the central line/portacath is fully secured and taped to your child's chest
- keep the line tucked away when not in use. Your child wearing a vest can help to prevent them fiddling with the central line
- don't allow the ends of the central line/portacath to dangle down into your child's nappy/groin area
- young children should not be allowed to pull or bite the central line/portacath
- never let the dressing get wet. For advice on bathing or showering see information pack on central venous/portacath care
- do not use scissors anywhere near the central line/portacath

What to do if the central line/portacath is accidentally removed or falls out

- do not panic – bleeding is unlikely to occur as the hole seals up quickly
- cover the area immediately with sterile gauze and press firmly for a few minutes
- contact the Community Nurse

If your child has a central line then you will probably be advised to attend hospital to check that the site is alright – a stitch or a new central line may be required.

What to do if the central line/portacath should accidentally get cut or split

- immediately clamp the part of the central line/portacath above the cut.
- wrap the open end in sterile gauze.
- contact the Community Nurse
- If your child has a central line then you will be advised to bring your child to hospital where the central line can be repaired.

What to do if the bung on the end of the central line/portacath should fall off

- wash your hands well
- clean the end of the central line/portacath with a chlorahexadine (cleaning solution) soaked sterile gauze
- apply a new bung. You will have spare equipment at home

Storing medication and equipment

All drugs and equipment should be stored in a clean dry place and away from children and pets at all times.

Drugs that need to be kept in the fridge are to be kept in the container provided by the hospital and kept away from food. A fridge thermometer will be loaned to you and the nurse will check this when he/she visits. If you are having problems with the thermometer please contact the Community Nurse.

Drugs that need to be kept in a cupboard should be kept clean and dry.

The Children's Community Nursing Team will supply you with all the equipment needed to complete your child's course of treatment.

Please read information pack on Central Venous Line and Portacaths then follow all advice.

For further information

If you have any concerns please contact the Children's Community Nursing Team by telephoning the contact numbers in the Children's Community Nursing Team Information – About The Service fact sheet.

This fact sheet gives only general information. You must always discuss the individual treatment of the child with the appropriate member of staff. Do not rely on this fact sheet alone for information about your child's treatment. This information can be made available in other languages and formats if requested.

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