



Patient & Family Guide  
2022

# Non-tunneled Hemodialysis Catheter



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# Non-tunneled Hemodialysis Catheter

## What is a non-tunneled hemodialysis catheter?

- A non-tunneled hemodialysis catheter is a special tube made of plastic. It is used for hemodialysis treatment.
- An interventional radiologist (doctor who specializes in X-rays) will insert (put in) the catheter into a large vein in your neck or chest. Sometimes the catheter may need to be placed into a large vein in your leg or groin.
- You will likely have 2 stitches where the catheter is inserted, to hold it in place. If these stitches come out, a nurse or doctor in the dialysis unit will replace them.
- The catheter tube inserted has 2 lumens (tubes) coming from it.
  - › One lumen carries blood from your body through special tubing connected to the dialysis machine.
  - › The other lumen carries clean blood from the dialysis machine back into your body.

## **Why do I need a non-tunneled hemodialysis catheter?**

You may need a non-tunneled hemodialysis catheter while you are waiting for an arteriovenous fistula, a peritoneal dialysis catheter, or a tunneled catheter.

## **How long can a non-tunneled hemodialysis catheter stay in place?**

A non-tunneled hemodialysis catheter can stay in place for as long as your doctor feels you need it.

## **How is the non-tunneled hemodialysis catheter inserted?**

- The catheter will be inserted in the hemodialysis treatment room or the Diagnostic Imaging (X-ray) Department.
- You will be asked to lie flat on an exam table.
- Sterile (clean) cloths will be placed over your face and body during the procedure.
- You will be given a local anesthetic (numbing medication) to numb (freeze) the area. You will be awake during the procedure.

## What will happen after the procedure?

- You may have discomfort or pain in the area where the catheter was placed. Please tell the nurse if you have any discomfort. You may be given medication to help with this.
- An X-ray will be done to make sure the catheter is in the right place.
- After the X-ray, your catheter can be used right away for dialysis treatment, if needed.
- There will be a sterile dressing covering the catheter site. It will be changed before each dialysis treatment and as needed.

## How to care for your catheter:

- Keep the dressing dry and intact (in one piece) at all times. **If the dressing gets wet or falls off, call the Hemodialysis Unit right away at 902-473-7544 (6:30 a.m. to 11 p.m., Monday to Saturday). If you cannot reach the unit, go to the nearest Emergency Department.**
- If your catheter is in your neck, ask someone to help wash your hair using these steps:
  1. Place 2 layers of plastic wrap over the dressing.
  2. Secure the plastic wrap with tape.
  3. Place a towel around your neck.
  4. Use the sink to wash your hair.

- **Do not** use safety pins near the catheter.
- **Do not** swim or soak in a hot tub.
- **Do not take tub baths if your catheter is in your leg or groin.**
- If your catheter is in your neck or chest, take tub baths instead of showers.
- **Do not** remove the dressing.
- **Do not** exercise your upper body too much (**do not** do contact sports or activities where you move your upper body like golf or basketball). Talk to your nurse or doctor if you have questions about activities or sports.

## Care at home

**Call the Hemodialysis Unit at 902-473-7544 (6:30 a.m. to 11 p.m., Monday to Saturday) or go to the nearest Emergency Department if you have:**

- › Pain or swelling around the catheter
- › Fever or chills
- › Bleeding or drainage through the dressing
- › A loose dressing

### **If your catheter falls out:**

- 1. Bear down (like you are about to poop) and hold your breath until you can cover the exit site (the spot where the catheter comes out of your body) with gauze, a clean cloth, or your hand.**
- 2. Keep applying pressure to the exit site.**
- 3. Call 911 or go to the nearest Emergency Department as soon as possible.**

**What are your questions?**

**Please ask. We are here to help you.**

# Notes:

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.

