

Removing Your Tunnelled (Cuffed) Haemodialysis Catheter

Introduction

This leaflet is about the procedure required to remove your tunnelled haemodialysis catheter. It is intended to provide you with the information you need before you agree to have the procedure performed. It does not replace discussion between you and your doctor or the renal access nurse specialist. Please ask all the questions you need to ensure that you fully understand what is involved, before you give your consent for your catheter to be removed.

Why am I having my tunnelled dialysis catheter removed?

There are many reasons why your tunnelled dialysis catheter is to be removed such as:

- infection
- thrombosis (blood clot)
- Catheter blockage
- it is no longer required.

If you are unsure about the reasons for the removal of your line, please ask your nurse or doctor.

Who will remove the catheter and where will it be done?

A kidney specialist (Consultant) or a trainee kidney specialist (Specialist Registrar) or a specially trained nurse will do the procedure. The operator performing the procedure may be different to the one who recommended the procedure to you, but they will be happy to answer your questions. It will be done in a special procedures room in the renal unit in the Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust. It is done under local

anaesthetic, so you will remain awake. You can eat and drink before and after the procedure.

Will I need a blood test?

A recent blood tests will be required to ensure that your blood will clot properly after the procedure.

How is the tunnelled dialysis catheter removed?

The nurse from the kidney unit giving your treatment or the doctor will arrange a date and time for this to happen.

Because the catheter is designed not to fall out, it has a cuff which adheres to the underneath layer of skin. The catheter will need to be gently released. The area of skin around the cuff will be cleaned and then made numb (so that it is not painful) with an injection of local anaesthetic. This injection stings slightly as it goes in, but goes numb very quickly. When it is completely numb, the operator will make a small cut in your skin. This will allow the cuff to be loosened from the underneath of the skin. You may feel a bit of pressure, but it will not hurt. Once the cuff is freed, the line will come out easily. The operator will take the line out when you are performing a breathing technique, which they will explain to you. They will tell you exactly when and what they would like you to do. They will gently press where the line went into the vein (under your neck) for about 10 minutes. You will have 2-3 stitches in your skin. The operator will ask you to rest on the bed for 2 hours. A dressing will cover the wound. It can be changed and replaced with a new dressing if necessary. This dressing must be kept clean and dry. If you are unsure how to change this dressing, please discuss this with a nurse. Once the stitches are removed, no dressing is required.

How long it will take?

It is not easy to predict how easy or complicated the procedure will be. This is influenced by how easy it is to free the cuff underneath your skin. Usually the whole procedure will take about 20-30 minutes.

When and who will remove the stitches?

The stitches should be removed after 7-10 days. A qualified nurse such as practice nurse (at the GP), community nurse or nurses from the kidney unit can remove them. You will need to book this in advance at a date and time convenient to you or during your dialysis days.

What should I look out for?

Bleeding

A little spot of blood on the dressing is to be expected. If the dressing becomes full with blood, please contact your nurse/doctor. Apply gentle pressure and contact us for advice.

Redness/soreness

When the local anaesthetic wears off, the area may feel and look a bit bruised. Please discuss what light painkillers may be best for this with your nurse/doctor.

Swelling/discharge

A small amount of puffiness after the removal is to be expected. If there is any increased swelling or discharge, please contact your GP, doctor or nurse in the kidney unit for further advice.

What should I not do?

Because of infection, when bathing, a shallow bath is recommended to avoid the 'dirty' water touching the area, showering is fine. If the dressing becomes wet, it should be replaced with a clean dry one. Once the stitches are removed, you may resume your normal bathing.

Contact us:

If you have any queries or concerns about the procedure whatsoever, or have not understood anything you have been told, please do not hesitate to ring us.

- Monday-Friday (except bank holidays) 08:30 - 16:30, please contact one of the Renal Day Case Unit staff nurses on **01392 404791/4792**.
- At all other times or if the above number is unavailable, please ring the hospital switchboard on **01392 411611** and ask for the **Renal Bleep Holder**.

The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by RD&E staff undertaking procedures at the RD&E hospitals.

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