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Ashford Hospital

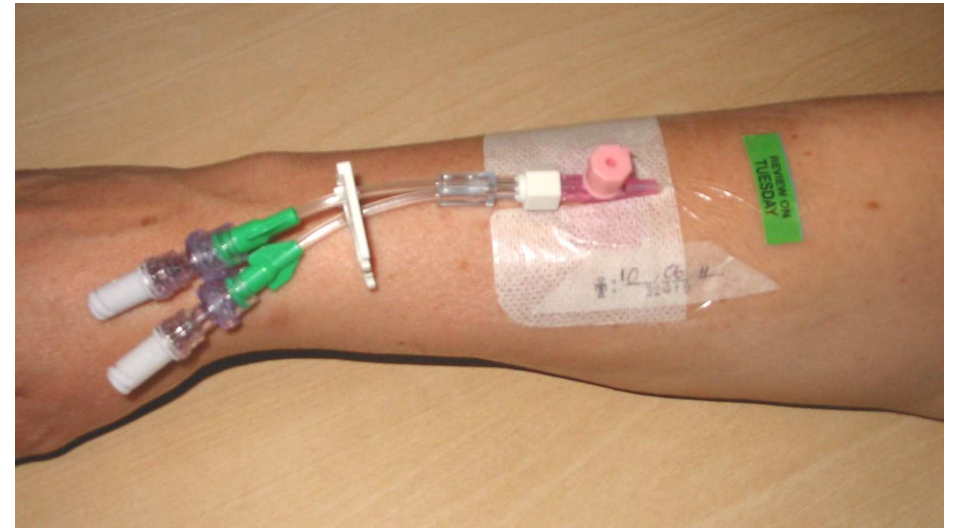
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Advice to Patients with a Cannula Infection Control



Further Information

We endeavour to provide an excellent service at all times, but should you have any concerns please, in the first instance, raise these with the Matron, Senior Nurse or Manager on duty. If they cannot resolve your concern, please contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01932 723553 or email pals@asph.nhs.uk. If you remain concerned, PALS can also advise upon how to make a formal complaint.

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Advice to Patients with a Cannula

What is a cannula?

Your cannula is a small tube that has been placed into a vein. The following information will help you and your visitors understand a number of general care points.

Should my cannula be replaced at set intervals?

Your cannula should normally be replaced approximately 96 hours (earlier if a problem occurs). However, staff may have a valid reason for leaving the cannula in for longer; this will be explained to you on request. To help with cannula replacement the cannula dressing usually has the date that the cannula was inserted written on it.

What can I do to help?

Inform staff if your cannula is reaching the 96 hour point. Also if your cannula has not been used for 24 hours inform staff, you may be able to have it removed. If you are being discharged from hospital and you still have a cannula please inform your nurse.

How will my cannula be held in place?

Your cannula will have been fixed to your skin with a special 'see through' dressing. This dressing should be changed if soiled or loose. Additional dressings such as bandages are not routinely

used. If bandages are used staff will remove these on a regular basis to check the cannula site.

What can I do to help?

Inform staff if your cannula dressing is soiled or loose. The dressing is waterproof; however we recommend that you do not soak your cannulated arm in water, such as when you have a bath. If the dressing gets wet in the shower, carefully pat it dry (remember to tell staff if it's loose).

How should the cannula be cared for?

The point at which your cannula enters your skin must be kept clean. Before the cannula is inserted the member of staff will clean their hands and your skin will be cleaned. The special 'see through' dressing will be placed over the cannula to keep the site clean. Staff will also observe the site through the dressing on a regular basis. Before staff use your cannula they must have cleaned their hands. They will then clean the connector that they use to join up drugs and fluids to your cannula. Before they administer your drugs or fluids they may use a small syringe of saline to flush and check the cannula.

What can I do to help?

Report any redness, pain or swelling at the cannula site. Inform staff when drips are empty. You may need new fluid or your cannula may need flushing. Empty fluid bags increase the chance of your cannula blocking.

Further Information

If you have any further concerns please do not hesitate to discuss with your nurse or the doctor.

Adapted from The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust