

Central Venous Access Device (CVAD)

Patient Information

What is a Central Venous Access Device (CVAD)?

CVADs are small, flexible tubes placed in large veins with the internal tip of the catheter usually lying above your heart. The insertion point varies; it may be in your chest, neck or groin. They come in single, double, triple or even quadruple tube varieties. Each separate tube will have a special **cap** attached to it. There is also a **clamp** to keep each tube closed when it is not in use.

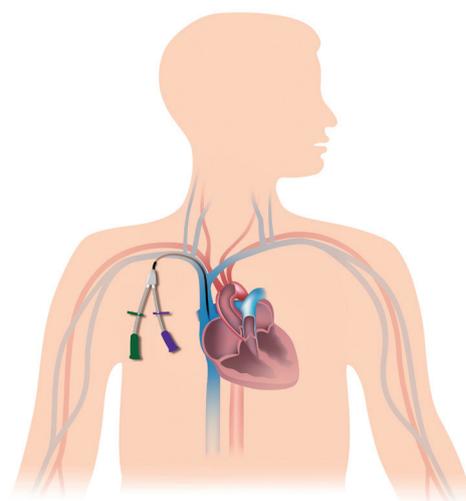
Care of your CVAD

Any person touching your CVAD should clean their hands well and use gloves. This is to minimise infection. The nurses will look at your CVAD entry site each shift. If you have any questions or concerns, you should talk to your nurse or doctor. The CVAD and tubing should not be disconnected for showers or walks as there is a risk that it may become blocked and infected. If not in constant use, a small amount of fluid is 'flushed' into the line using a syringe by the nurse or doctor. The entry site will be dressed at least once a week. The dressing may need to be changed earlier if it is wet, lifting or not clean.

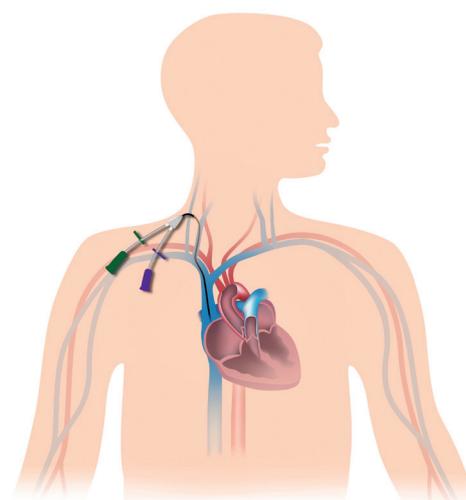
Possible problems with a CVAD

Infection

It is possible for an infection to develop either inside the CVAD or around the entry site.



Subclavian vein insertion



Internal jugular vein insertion

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You should tell your doctor or nurse if:

- the entry site becomes red or swollen
- you notice discoloured fluid coming from the entry site
- if you notice any pain or bleeding from the CVAD
- you feel sweats or shivers / temperatures

It is very important not to unnecessarily touch the CVAD and always have clean hands when touching the CVAD or near to it.

Clots

As the CVAD is sitting in the bloodstream, it is possible for a blood clot (thrombosis) to form. If this occurs, the line may have to be removed. Sometimes medication is used to dissolve clots. You should tell your doctor or nurse if you notice any unusual swelling of your arm, hand or neck.

Air in the catheter

No air must be allowed to get into your CVAD. The clamps should always be closed when the line is not in use. **The line must not be left unclamped when the caps are not in place.**

Will my CVAD fall out?

CVAD are 16-20cm long and held in place by stitches. It is very unlikely to fall out, however you should take care not to accidentally catch it or pull on it as this will affect its position. Never use force on your CVAD.

How is the CVAD removed?

When you no longer need the device the doctor will arrange for it to be taken out. This is a simple procedure, done by the nurse. You will need to lie flat in bed and follow the nurse's instructions. A sterile dressing will be put over the exit site. The site will need to be kept covered and observed until the skin has healed.

Please ask the staff if you have any further questions about your CVAD.

Interpreter Services

Professional interpreters are available if you need help understanding or speaking English.

Interpreter services are free and confidential. You can ask for an interpreter if one is not offered to you. The staff will book the interpreter for you. If you need an interpreter so you can contact us, please call the telephone Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450.

Additional Information

Insertion Date:

Pressure Injectable? Yes No