

How should I look after the cannula?

- Keep the area clean and dry and do not touch it. Try not to bump the cannula.
- Don't wear jewellery such as watches on the same side as the cannula.
- Take care when removing clothing to stop the cannula being moved. Try to wear loose clothing.
- Tell a member of staff if:
 - the dressing becomes wet, dirty, loose or falls off.
 - the area becomes red, painful or swollen around the cannula.
 - you feel hot, cold or shivery.
- If the cannula is no longer being used for medications or fluids, **ask if it can be taken out.**

Information about

Peripheral Venous Catheter (PVC)

What is a Peripheral Venous Catheter (PVC)?

An intravenous (IV) PVC is commonly called a cannula. It is a small plastic tube that is inserted through the skin into a vein in the arm, hand or leg (for young children it may be through a vein in the scalp). This allows health care staff to give you IV fluids and medicines. You may need more than 1 PVC at the same time and staff will explain this to you.

Why do I need a PVC?

- Your doctor may have prescribed IV fluids and medicines, which may be the best or the only way for you to get the treatment. The treatment may be given through a drip (infusion) or using a syringe.
- You may need the PVC for anaesthetic medicines or for a diagnostic test where contrast media (dye) or other substances need to be injected.

How will the PVC be put in?

Healthcare staff will explain the treatment, ask for your verbal consent and tell you about what to expect so that you can report any side effects or problems.

The member of staff inserting the PVC will take precautions to help prevent infection. They will do this by:

- Performing hand hygiene and putting on clean gloves and a plastic apron
- Carefully cleaning the skin where the PVC is going to be inserted
- Using a sterile PVC cannula
- Using a technique which reduces the risk of infection

Staff insert the PVC into the vein using a fine needle which they then remove to leave the cannula in the vein. There may be a sharp pain as the needle goes in, but this should stop once the cannula is in place. If the pain continues, tell the member of staff who is inserting the cannula. Once inserted, staff will apply a sterile dressing and flush the cannula with saline to check that it is in the vein. The fluid may feel cool as it goes in.

How will the staff look after the cannula?

They will: -

- Check that your dressing covering the cannula is clean, dry and secure and replace it as necessary.
- Check that the cannula is working properly and the skin around it is not red or painful before giving any treatment.
- Inspect the cannula at least once a day while still in use and record this in the PVC care plan.
- Clean the bung with an alcohol impregnated wipe before using it.
- Remove the cannula if it becomes red, painful or swollen or when it is no longer needed and before you go home.