

What to Do for Hemodialysis Catheter Emergencies

- ▶ It is rare for problems to occur with hemodialysis catheters after leaving the dialysis unit. This brochure tells you what to do if it does happen.


What supplies do I need to keep in my emergency kit?

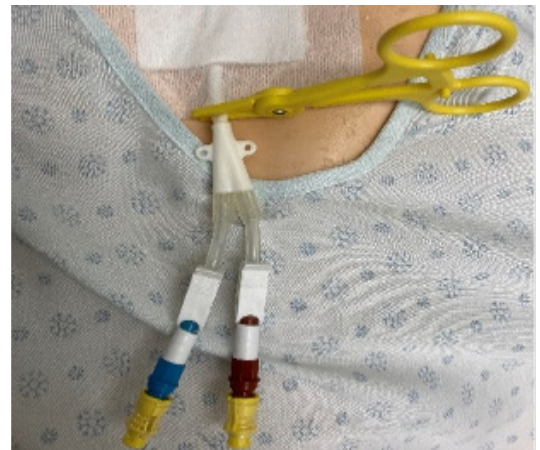
- Gauze pads
- Dressing
- Tape
- Gloves
- Clamp

What if my catheter is damaged?

(e.g., crack, slit or injury to catheter site)

1. CALL FOR HELP from someone nearby.
2. Apply clamp as high up on your catheter as possible, close to your skin (see top photo).
3. If there is bleeding from your catheter:
 - Ensure the clamp is applied; AND
 - Place firm pressure over your neck vein and exit site while sitting up (see bottom photo). Use the cleanest thing you can find (e.g., gauze, clean cloth, towel). See bottom photo.
4. Go to the Emergency Department **IMMEDIATELY**.

 Reminder: Never use sharp objects such as knives and scissors near your catheter.



What if my catheter falls out?

1. If your catheter falls **part way out**, do not **try** to push it back in.
 - CALL FOR HELP from someone nearby.
 - Tape it in place.
 - Go to the Emergency Department **IMMEDIATELY**.
2. If your catheter falls **all the way out**, do not **try** to put it back in.
 - CALL FOR HELP from someone nearby.
 - If bleeding, place firm pressure over your neck vein AND exit site while sitting up. Use the cleanest thing you can find (e.g., gauze, clean cloth, towel).
 - If no bleeding, place a dressing over the exit site.
 - Go to the Emergency Department.



What do I do if I think my catheter is infected?

1. Call your dialysis unit if you experience:
 - Redness, warmth or pain along the catheter
 - Oozing or drainage from your exit site
 - Noticeable swelling or itching around your catheter or neck
 - You are feverish (temperature 38°C or higher, chills, weakness), and have any of the above symptoms
2. If your dialysis unit is closed, go to the Emergency Department.

