

## WHAT IF MY VASCATH BLEEDS?

If you notice that you are bleeding at your vascath site or that your vascath has fallen out **apply firm pressure over the area**. This could be with a piece of gauze or a clean towel.

Come straight to the hospital Emergency Department.

If you notice that the vascath is bleeding from the end of one of the tubes a clamp may have been left open. **Close the clamp immediately**.

OR

Maybe one of the caps has become dislodged from the end. Replace it and contact the hospital.

Call an ambulance (000) for immediate medical assistance if catheter is accidentally cut.

## YOU WILL NEED TO CONTACT THE HOSPITAL IF:

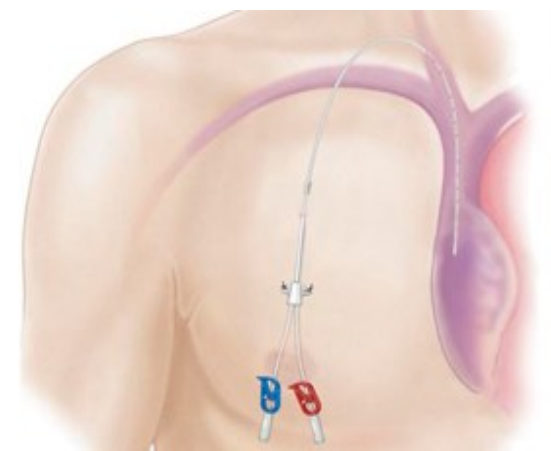
You notice any signs of infection i.e. fever, nausea, feeling unwell, redness, discharge or pain over the vascath site.

For further information ask the Vascular Access Nurse  
9113 1111 page 310  
Mobile 0457756436  
(Mon-Fri 8.00-4.30)

otherwise call the staff on  
4 West Haemodialysis  
9113 1151  
9113 2078

For clinic appointments contact  
91134534

## St George Hospital Renal Department Patient Education Leaflet



## MANAGING YOUR VASCATH 2015

## WHY DO I NEED A VASCATH?

A vascath is a tube made of special plastic and it is shaped like a Y.

A vascath is used as a temporary access for haemodialysis. At present you have no other means of connecting you to the machine i.e. an AV fistula

## INSERTION OF A VASCATH

A vascath is most commonly placed in two areas of your body

1. The neck or jugular vein
2. Your groin or femoral vein

The doctor will decide which area is appropriate and explain the procedure to you. The doctor will also ask you to sign a consent for the procedure.

The catheter will be inserted in the X Ray Department during normal working hours or alternatively in the treatment room in the Intensive Care Unit.

Before the vascath is inserted the area is cleaned with antiseptic lotion and some local anaesthetic is used to numb the area. Patients who require a special tunneled vascath will have sedation before the procedure.

## WHO USES THE VASCATH?

Your vascath is only to be used by the dialysis nurses for the purpose of connecting you to the haemodialysis machine. It is not to be used by other nurses or doctors for the infusion of medications or fluids.

## CARE OF YOUR VASCATH

The vascath is now a very important part of your body and you need to be mindful of its care. A vascath needs to be kept clean and secure at all times.

The vascath dressing is changed by the dialysis nurses weekly or as required. It must remain intact between these times and if it becomes loose at home secure it with some tape.

If the dressing falls off cover the area with some clean gauze. You should contact the dialysis unit as you will need to come and have the dressing reapplied.

To decrease the risk of infection we suggest that you keep the dressing dry at all times. A plastic bag cover will be given to you to cover the vascath when you are showering. Avoid direct water flow to the vascath area.

**DO NOT** use any sharp objects e.g. Scissors near the vascath which can cause damage to the vascath.

## ACTIVITIES TO AVOID

- Swimming.
- Lifting,
- Strenuous exercise