

## What should I do if I have any concerns about my cannula care?

We welcome your feedback and act on it. If you have any comments, concerns or queries about the care of your cannula, or another infection control concern please do not hesitate to speak to the:

- Person in charge of your ward/department.
- Infection Prevention Team      Tel No: (0151) 430 1077
- PALS      Tel No: (0151) 430 1376

Alternatively, you could use the suggestions and comments box on each ward.

If, after reading this leaflet you have any further questions, please contact your doctor or discharge ward on:

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Whiston Hospital  
Warrington Road,  
Prescot, Merseyside, L35 5DR  
Telephone: 0151 426 1600



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## Caring for your cannula

### What you need to know

#### (Insertion of a small plastic tube into the vein)

This leaflet can be made available  
in alternative languages / formats on request.

如有需要，本传单可提供其他语言/版式  
此單張的其他語言/格式版本可按要求提供

Na żądanie ta ulotka może zostać udostępniona  
w innych językach/formatach.

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## Caring for your cannula - what you need to know.

### What is a cannula?

A cannula is a small tube inserted into a vein in your body to give treatment directly into the bloodstream, for example fluids and medications, for an investigation / procedure or for emergency care. Cannulas should not be used to take blood samples for testing; if blood samples are needed they will be taken in a separate procedure. Before your cannula is inserted a member of your clinical team will talk to you about why it is needed for your care, as well as the risks of having it. Once this has been explained you will be able to ask any questions you may have, and decide if you agree to have the cannula put in.

Any procedure or device such as a cannula, that breaches the skin or the body's natural defences could cause irritation or damage to the area where it is placed, or become infected. Your doctor, nurse and the team caring for you will minimise these risks as much as possible by following our Trust Policy, which is based on national best practice guidance. Your cannula will be checked at least three times a day for any warning signs of irritation or infection, and to make sure it is still properly in place and secure.

### How long will the cannula stay in for?

A cannula is normally used when access to a vein for your care is needed for less than 7-10 days. Your cannula should be replaced every 72 hours or earlier if there are any signs that a problem may occur. Rarely the cannula may stay in its current position for longer than 72 hours, in which case please ask your nurse or doctor if you have any questions or concerns. It will be removed as soon as it is no longer needed for your treatment. To help staff with knowing when to replace the cannula the dressing must have the date written on it when it is inserted.

It is best that you **do not** leave the ward when you have a cannula in place unless it is advised by the staff caring for you (e.g. for tests or treatment in another department).

### You should report to your nurse straight away if:

- Your cannula becomes loose, disconnects from the medication you are having or if it falls out.
- The dressing or cap on the cannula becomes loose.
- You see any leaking of fluid or blood around the cannula.
- You have any pain, swelling or redness at the site of the cannula.

### It is also important that you:

- Let your nurse / doctor know if your cannula has not been used for the last 24 hours, it may be able to be removed.
- Do not touch the cannula unnecessarily as this can cause germs to get in and increase the risk of infection.
- Keep the cannula dry when showering or bathing.
- Take care when moving around not to pull on the cannula or connected tubing.

### Staff caring for you:

- Must remove your cannula as soon as it is no longer needed for your care / on discharge (unless your doctor has stated otherwise).
- Must check your cannula, the site and dressing at least once on every shift, and each time it is used.
- Must replace the cannula at 72 hours, except in rare conditions, which should be explained to you and discussed with your medical team.
- Must always wash their hands before and after touching your cannula and wear gloves. If they do not you are well within your rights to ask them to do so.
- Must always clean the connector at the end of the cannula thoroughly for 30 seconds and allow it to dry, before it is used.
- Must always flush the cannula before and after use to check that it is working well (if this caused you any discomfort please report this straight away).