

Having an IV cannula

Infection Prevention

Information for Patients & Carers

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What is an IV cannula?

We insert a small plastic hollow tube into a small vein in your hand or arm. We call this an intravenous (IV) cannula. Intravenous means in the 'vein'.

We use this to give you medication (like antibiotics) or fluids. We use this when you cannot take medication or fluid by mouth. You can also need it for the medication that has to enter your blood stream directly.

Why do I need a cannula?

- For your prescription. This can be medication, fluids or blood products that need to be given directly into your blood stream (intravenously).
- For short term use. This is for diagnostic tests. We put a dye or other substance into your blood stream. You can also need it for an anesthetic.
- For long term use. You may need some days of intravenous medications like antibiotics for an infection.

How is a cannula put in?

We put the cannula in during your hospital stay or visit or at an outpatient clinic. A trained healthcare staff does this.

1. We put the cannula into your vein using a sharp needle.
2. This needle is then taken out and disposed of safely.
3. You may feel discomfort as the needle goes in. This pain should stop when the cannula is put in.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

4. We put a dressing over the cannula. This is to keep it secure and stop infections.
5. We put a small amount of fluid through the cannula. This is to check it has been correctly placed in the vein.

How do you safely insert the cannula?

- Staff will clean their hands before inserting your cannula. This is to reduce the risk of infection. They will also wear gloves and an apron. We will clean the skin around the area.
- We open the packaging just before use. We make a note in your records of the date and time when your cannula was inserted.
- Ask if staff have cleaned their hands before inserting your cannula. Do this if you have not seen them clean their hands.

How long will my cannula stay in place?

- You will need your IV cannula for as long as your prescribed medication.
- Your cannula may need to stay in place for up to 5 days or longer. A trained healthcare staff will decide this. This will be as long as there is no redness or pain around it.
- You may need to have more than 1 cannula during treatment. This is if you have different products that need to be given through the cannula.
- The nurse will assess the area around the cannula during your stay. This will be 2 times every day when you receive your treatment. They may replace the cannula earlier than usual, if needed.

Possible risks

Every procedure carries possibility of some risks. This is a very simple and safe procedure, with very little risk of complications.

Please let your nurse or doctor know as soon as possible if you have:

- continued pain where the cannula goes into your skin.
- pain or discomfort when your medication is given through the cannula.
- a burning sensation, swelling or redness around the site of the cannula.
- a raised temperature, feel feverish or shaky.

Looking after your IV cannula

Take care of your cannula so it does not come out or become infected:

- **Keep the dressing clean and dry.** Tell the nurse if the dressing starts to come away from the skin. If you are at home, try and secure it with tape until the dressing can be changed.
- **Protect it from knocks.** Swap any jewellery and watches to the opposite hand. This is to stop it from getting stuck on the cannula.
- **Wear loose clothing.** Try to wear loose sleeves to make it easier to dress and undress. The cannula can get caught on clothing. This can cause the cannula to move out of place.
- **Try not to bend the wrist or elbow joint too much** where the cannula may be in place. This can dislodge the cannula.
- **Never put anything into your cannula.** Unless you have been specially trained to give your own medication.

Can I have a shower or bath?

Yes, it is ok to have a shower or bath. **Do not get the cannula dressing wet:**

- The nurse will help you to keep it dry when taking a shower or bath in hospital.
- Do not soak your arm underwater.
- Always dab the dressing dry if it becomes wet.
- You should wrap cling film around it when taking a shower or bath to keep it dry. Do this if you are sent home with a cannula.
- You should never go swimming with a cannula in place.

What if the cannula comes out?

The cannula is fragile and movement can make the hollow plastic tube come out. Do not panic if it does come out. If you are staying in hospital tell your nurse if it comes out.

If you are sent home with a cannula for treatment, follow these instructions if it comes out:

1. Immediately stop the bleeding.
2. Apply firm pressure over the site using a clean dry tissue or cloth. Do this for 3 to 4 minutes or until the bleeding has stopped.
3. Remove the dressing if it is still in place.
4. Cover the site with a plaster and keep in place for 2 hours.
5. Contact the department looking after your treatment.

How is the IV cannula removed?

We will change your cannula at regular intervals. We will take it out when your treatment is finished. If you are being discharged please make sure you do not go home with the cannula in place. Unless you are having intravenous medication at home through community service staff.

Removing a cannula is a painless procedure. A nurse will remove the plastic tubing from your hand or arm. Then they will put a small dressing over the area. Keep the dressing in place for 2 hours.

Preventing the spread of infection at Leicester's hospitals

We reduce the risk of healthcare related infections across our hospitals. We have a dedicated Infection Prevention Team. We have policies which are evidence based and regularly reviewed.

We closely monitor infection rates across our hospitals and any risks. We report any trends to our Infection Prevention Assurance Committee, our Board of Directors and Public Health England.

If you have any worries please contact the Infection Prevention Team on 0116 258 5448.

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

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