

Troubleshooting Your Central Line (Part 2)

Leakage

IV lines are designed to be a closed system. All connections from the patient to the tubing and syringe that holds the factor should be complete and closed. If leakage is noticed without an obvious source, you may need to troubleshoot:

- First, stop anything that is infusing.
- Check all tubing from end to end, paying attention to connections.
- Has the IV tubing, fluids or end cap been recently changed?
- If the dressing over the central line (CL) insertion site is wet or loose, be prepared to change the dressing. Never leave a loose or soiled dressing on your CL.
- What is leaking? Is it the medication, fluids or blood?
- If you find that the IV tubing has a hole, a crack, or other damage, follow instructions for changing the IV tubing.
- If you find the CL CATHETER IS DAMAGED, clamp the CL above the area of damage with a line clamp or other device that has been provided (sometimes called a Dravon clamp). Notify your medical provider for evaluation and repair of your CL.
- NEVER use scissors or other sharp objects near the CL catheter, IV line or dressing.
- NEVER attempt to repair a CL that is damaged or broken. This must be done by trained providers. Do not clean the CL or skin with anything other than products that have been supplied for CL care.

If, at any time, blood is the source of leakage, locate the source. In addition to the above, check to see if the line is still in place. If the insertion site is bleeding, apply gauze or other dressing to the area with pressure. If bleeding is severe, get emergency assistance. If the CL has accidentally been dislodged, notify your medical provider.

Skin Irritation

The dressing over your CL should be changed on a regular schedule. You should be taught how to do this during your initial training. Due to the location of the CL (near the heart), infection is a risk for anyone with a CL. Keeping the dressing clean and dry is essential.

Occasionally people may experience skin irritation or rash at the entry/exit site of the CL. Normal movement of the line (arm), leakage and wet dressings may cause severe irritation.

- If you have skin allergies or sensitivities to certain tapes, ointments, latex, or cleaning products, be sure caregivers and providers are aware of this.
- Accept the assistance of others to help you dress and bathe. This can help prevent pulling or trauma to your CL and dressing.

- Avoid activities that may place you at risk of restricting movement of your line or risk your dressing getting wet or disrupted.
- Do not use safety pins near your line or attach the line to your clothing.
- When sleeping, position yourself, and use pillows if needed, to protect your line.

Dressing Changes

- A securement device may have been placed when the line was put in. Change this only if you have been instructed to and have a replacement device available. If stitches are in place, do not remove.
- Use caution when removing old dressing; hold the surrounding skin to avoid pulling.
- If using a clear adhesive dressing, remove it by pulling the edge sideways (vs. up and away from the body) while holding the line.
- Be careful not to remove or pull on the CL catheter. Note the length of the line outside of the body. Monitor this and notify your homecare provider if it moves.
- Change the dressing in an area free of dust, drafts or with others present, to avoid germs.
- When cleaning products are applied, always leave them on the skin so they can dry in between before proceeding to next step of dressing change.
- Avoid placing tape or other adhesive over any irritated skin.
- Do not rub or scratch the area, or apply any over-the-counter ointments that have not been prescribed for such use.
- Any rash that is present all over, or accompanied by sudden itching or difficulty breathing, should be evaluated immediately by your medical provider.
- **Notify your healthcare provider if rash or irritation continues or if you notice any foul odor, drainage, pain, heat, fever, chills or increasing redness to the area.**

911

Seek emergency assistance for any severe, life threatening situation, including uncontrolled bleeding, difficulty breathing, chest pain, severe pain, or swelling of the face or neck with or without rash.

Contact your BioRx representative for further information, or call us at 866-442-4679.