



Removal of a haemodialysis tunnelled catheter

Information for patients from the Renal Department

Your doctor or nurse will have discussed with you that it is necessary to remove your haemodialysis catheter. This leaflet explains why and how it is done.

Why am I having my tunnelled haemodialysis (HD) catheter removed?

There are many reasons why tunnelled HD catheters are removed, for example:

- **It is no longer needed.** This can happen if your fistula or graft is being used successfully for dialysis or you no longer need dialysis.
- **Infection** of your catheter.
- Your catheter is **not working properly.**

Your doctor or nurse will explain the reason why your catheter needs to be removed.

Who will remove my catheter and where will it be removed?

A specialist nurse or doctor will remove your catheter on Marlowe Ward at the Kent and Canterbury Hospital (K&C) or, less often, in the Maidstone Renal Unit.

Will the procedure hurt?

The procedure is performed using local anaesthetic (the area is numbed). You may feel light pressure but it should not be painful.

Can I eat and drink?

Yes, you can eat and drink as normal on the day of your procedure.



Do I need to stop any medicines before my procedure?

You can take all of your normal medicines on the day of your procedure. However, if you take Warfarin or any other anti-coagulation medicine, the renal access nurse will advise you when to stop taking these medicines and give you any specific advice.

How is the tunnelled dialysis catheter removed and how long will it take?

Your nurse or doctor will fully explain the procedure on the day.

The procedure involves a small incision (cut) above where the catheter exits your skin. You will have a few stitches which are covered by a small dressing.

The procedure will take approximately 30 to 40 minutes. You will need to remain lying down for 30 minutes after your procedure. Please allow at least two hours for your appointment.

Will I need to change my dressing?

We advise you to keep your dressing dry for two days following your procedure. After that you can shower or have a bath, but keep a dressing over your wound until the stitches are removed. You will be given spare dressings before you leave hospital, so please apply a clean dressing after showering or bathing.

Who will remove my stitches?

Your stitches will need to be removed seven days after your procedure. This can be done by a haemodialysis nurse when you attend for dialysis. Or, you can arrange for it to be done at your GP practice, if you prefer.

Can I drive myself home after my procedure?

Yes, you will be able to drive yourself home after the procedure.

Are there any restrictions after this procedure?

- We advise you to rest for the remainder of the day.
- Do not carry out any strenuous work or exercise, or heavy lifting for 24 hours.
- You can still have your dialysis on the same day as this procedure.

What are the possible complications?

- **Bleeding.** A small spot of blood on the dressing after your procedure is to be expected. It is unlikely, but if your dressing becomes soaked with blood we advise you to apply firm pressure for five minutes, using all of your fingers just above your collar bone on the side where the catheter has been removed. This should stop the bleeding.

Your nurse will demonstrate how and where to apply pressure before you go home. You will be given gauze pads to take home.

If the bleeding has not stopped after five minutes, call Marlowe Ward on 01227 78 31 00 or 999 if heavy bleeding continues.

- **Discomfort.** Once the local anaesthetic wears off, the area may be sore for up to 12 hours. If you need a painkiller, we would recommend you take paracetamol, as directed on the packaging. Please avoid all anti-inflammatory medicines.
- The risk of **infection** to the area is very low. If you notice the area becomes hot, red, painful, or starts discharging pus, please report this to your dialysis nurse or the access nurse (contact details are below).

Where can I find out more?

Please feel free to ring at any time for further information.

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| • Renal Dialysis Access Nurses, K&C
(Monday to Friday, 8am to 4:30pm) | Telephone: 01227 86 43 05 |
| • Marlowe Ward, K&C
(Out of hours or weekends) | Telephone: 01227 78 31 00 |
| • Thomas Becket Haemodialysis Unit, K&C | Telephone: 01227 78 30 47 |
| • Haemodialysis Unit, William Harvey Hospital, Ashford | Telephone: 01233 65 18 72 |
| • Haemodialysis Unit, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital, Margate | Telephone: 01843 22 55 44 |
| • Haemodialysis Unit, Medway Maritime Hospital, Medway | Telephone: 01634 82 51 05 |
| • Haemodialysis Unit, Buckland Hospital, Dover | Telephone: 01304 22 26 95 |
| • Haemodialysis Unit, Maidstone Hospital, Maidstone | Telephone: 01622 22 59 01 |

This leaflet has been produced with and for patients

If you would like this information in **another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read, or large print** please ask a member of staff. You can ask someone to contact us on your behalf.

Any complaints, comments, concerns, or compliments please speak to your doctor or nurse, or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01227 78 31 45, or email ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net

Patients should not bring in large sums of money or valuables into hospital. Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property had been handed in to Trust staff for safe-keeping.

Further patient leaflets are available via the East Kent Hospitals web site www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patientinformation