

# **Sending patients home with a peripheral cannula in the Medical Assessment Unit and Ambulatory Care setting**

## **Information for Patients**

---

### **Introduction**

You have been given this leaflet as you are going home with a cannula in your vein. This leaflet is to support you with further information relating to having a cannula.

### **What is a cannula?**

A cannula is a small plastic tube inserted into the vein. It is often referred to as a Venflon.

The cannula once inserted can stay in the vein for 72 hours and should be reviewed twice daily as an inpatient and once daily as an outpatient by medical or nursing staff. If not in use or any signs of an infection it should be removed immediately.

If the cannula is inserted in an emergency situation the cannula will require to be removed within 24 hours due to the increased risk of infection.

### **Why do I need a cannula?**

A cannula is used for intravenous (IV) antibiotics, IV medication, IV fluids and blood products. It allows you to receive treatment for your condition in the most effective form.

### **Why do I need to go home with a cannula?**

You will only go home with a cannula if you are happy to do so and if you are receiving IV medication under our care the following day.

By reducing the need for daily cannulas during the course of your treatment helps reduce the risk of introducing a new infection.

## How do I care for my cannula?

- Once inserted by a trained member of hospital staff, they will place a clear adhesive dressing to secure in place.
- You will not need to carry out any interventions to the cannula.
- Be careful when removing your clothes.
- Keep the cannula clean and dry.
- If bathing avoid getting the area wet.
- If you have any pain, swelling or redness at the site please inform a nurse or doctor immediately.

## What happens to the cannula if it comes out?

It is important to protect the cannula, often if it is knocked it can become dislodged.

If the cannula comes out please use a clean gauze (provided on discharge) or tissue and press to the punctured area till the bleeding has stop. This may take 2-5 minutes or longer. Then cover the area with a plaster.

Please return the cannula to the hospital setting to be disposed of as per infection control guidelines, do not place in household waste.

Call the acute receiving unit/ambulatory care to inform them what has happened if you are unable to stop the bleeding and you may need to return to the hospital to be assessed.

## Once the cannula is removed what should I look out for?

Once removed there is a chance that an infection could develop at the cannula site as the puncture site is effectively on open wound. This is most common within the 48 hours after removal.

Continue to observe the area for pain, redness or swelling and seek medical attention if this happens.

## Useful contact numbers

Medical Assessment Unit/Ambulatory Care Western General Hospital	0131 537 1330
NHS 24	111
NHS Emergency	999
For further information please call:	0131 537 1330

## **Public Transport and Travel Information**

Bus details available from:

Lothian Buses on **0131 555 6363** or [www.lothianbuses.co.uk](http://www.lothianbuses.co.uk)

Traveline Scotland on **08712002233** or [www.travelinescotland.com](http://www.travelinescotland.com)

Train details available from:

National Rail Enquiries on **03457 484 950** or [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk)

## **Patient Transport**

Patient Transport will only be made available if you have a medical/clinical need. Telephone **0300 123 1236** \*calls charged at local rate up to 28 days in advance to book, making sure you have your CHI Number available. Hearing or speech impaired? Use text relay: **18001-0300 123 1236\*** (calls charged at local rate). To cancel patient transport, telephone: 0800 389 1333 (Freephone 24 hour answer service).

## **Interpretation and Translation**

Your GP will inform us of any interpreting requirements you have before you come to hospital and we will provide an appropriate interpreter. If you are having this procedure as an existing in patient, staff will arrange interpreting support for you in advance of this procedure. This leaflet may be made available in a larger print, Braille or your community language.