


Are there any risks?

This is a safe procedure but as with any medical treatments some risks and complications can arise.

Removing a central line from inside a blood vessel carries certain risks which includes damage to the blood vessel, bruising or bleeding. Very occasionally the catheter can snap inside. These risks are very rare; however you may need further treatment such as surgery, or another procedure to repair them.

If you have any complications please contact your treatment centre, or if this happens out of hours contact NHS24 on  111.

If you have any questions please telephone your treatment centre.

Acute Services Division
Diagnostic Imaging



Information about

Removing your Tunnelled Central Venous Catheter (central line)



Why do I need this procedure?

You no longer need a tunnelled central venous catheter (central line) for your treatment or medication.

Who will remove it?

A specially trained nurse or doctor.

Where will it be done?

In the x-ray department, a treatment room or other clinical area.

How long will it take?

This can vary for a number of reasons however you can expect to be in the clinical area for about 30 minutes. You will also need to rest for another 10 minutes.

When can I discuss the procedure?

You can discuss this with your referring doctor or nurse at the clinic or in the ward, and also with the nurse or doctor before your procedure.

Consent

We will ask you to sign a consent form before the procedure. Please make sure that you ask any questions you may have. When signing the form you should know what we plan to do, alternative treatments, and any risks or complications of the procedure.

What do I need to do before the procedure?

You may already be in hospital or we may ask you to attend as an out-patient.

You may need certain blood tests but we will discuss this with you.

You will need to undress and wear a hospital gown.

What happens during the procedure?

This is a sterile procedure. The technique may vary but generally you will lie on your back on the procedure trolley or x-ray table. The table or trolley will be tilted slightly with your head down.

We will clean the area over the catheter exit site with antiseptic solution and then inject a local anaesthetic. You may experience some slight discomfort when we inject the local anaesthetic. This will not last long. We make a small cut near the exit site of the cuff.

The nurse or doctor will then gently loosen the cuff holding the line in place with a special instrument.

We then close the wound with skin closure strips or a stitch. Then we place a sterile dressing over the wound.

What happens afterwards?

You should leave the dressing in place for 5 days. It is important to keep this area dry and clean. Do not apply any creams or talcum to the surrounding area.

After 5 days you can remove the dressing and closure strips. If the wound has healed you will not need a dressing.

If a stitch is in place we will make arrangements for the District Nurse to remove it.

If you notice any bleeding on the dressing after the removal of the central line, apply pressure over the area and lie down until it stops bleeding. Then apply a clean dressing over your existing dressing.

If you are having your procedure as an in patient you will return to your ward. The nursing staff in the ward will look after your dressing and wound.