



IV: Central Line Preventing Bloodstream Infections

Many patients need a special type of IV (intravenous catheter) to receive medicines or nutrition. This is called a central venous catheter (CVC) or central venous line (CVL). It can be used when IV therapy will be needed for a long time or when the small veins in the body can no longer be used for IV therapy.

- A CVL is a small plastic tube called a catheter. It is inserted into the bloodstream with the tip placed near the right side of the heart. The catheter may be inserted while your child is in the Intensive Care Unit, in Interventional Radiology or in the Operating Room.
- There are several different types of CVLs. Your child's catheter may be referred to by its brand name. Examples of brand names include Broviac[®], Hickman[®], Vortex port or Implantofix[®], or PICC.
- Blood is normally a very clean fluid. Any germs (bacteria) that get into the bloodstream can make the child very sick. Bacteria may enter the bloodstream through the use of CVLs.

Note to the Health Professional:

This Helping Hand may be used along with one or more of these Helping Hands:

HH-II-36, IV: *Tunneled Central Venous Catheter*

HH-II-129, IV: *Tunneled Central Venous Catheter, Care at Home*

HH-II-137, IV: *PICC Catheter*

HH-II-134, IV: *PICC Catheter, Care at Home*

HH-II-44, IV: *Subcutaneous Implanted Port (SIP)*

HH-II-130, IV: *Subcutaneous Implanted Port (SIP), Care at Home,*

What we are doing to prevent bloodstream infections

At Nationwide Children's Hospital, we are always working to prevent central line infections by strictly following these steps:

- Proper hand washing (hand hygiene) must be done by all caregivers who take care of your child's CVL. Gloves must also be worn by anyone handling a CVL.
- Caregivers, who take care of children with CVLs, should not wear artificial nails. The nails harbor bacteria even after hand washing. Natural nail tips should be kept to a length of ¼ inch.

Continued on page 2

What we are doing to prevent bloodstream infections, continued

- An alcohol protector cap is applied to the needleless connector on the CVL when not in use to keep the access site clean.
- Before hooking up IV tubing, giving any medicine into the CVL, or drawing blood, the alcohol protector cap is removed. If no protector cap is in place, the caregiver must clean the top of the connector or port using an alcohol scrub device or swab.
- The alcohol scrub device is used for 10 seconds or an alcohol swab is used for 15 seconds to scrub the port or connector vigorously.
- The alcohol then dries for 5 seconds.
- A CVL must have a sterile dressing over the site where the catheter extends outside of the body. The dressing must be intact at all times to prevent infection. It is changed once a week or if it becomes wet, dirty or loose. When the dressing is changed, the nurse will wear a mask, gown and sterile gloves.
- The caregiver will watch closely for signs of infection. These signs may include fever or any redness or drainage at the site.

What you can do to help

Watch to see that everyone practices good hand hygiene. Remind doctors and nurses if they seem to have forgotten to clean their hands. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's CVL or the care of his or her CVL, please let us know.