

## Caring for your Child with a Cannula at home

Your child needs to be treated with intravenous medication. This means that their medicine will be given directly into a vein. Your child has had a cannula put in so that the medicine can be given in this way.

A cannula is a flexible plastic tube that is placed directly into a vein and secured in place. It will need to stay in place until your child's course of medication is completed. The doctors have decided that your child is well enough to be allowed home in between doses of medication with the cannula in place. This leaflet is to explain how to care for your child's cannula whilst at home.

### Care of the cannula

Caring for your child's cannula is important to prevent problems. To make sure the cannula stays in place it will be secured with a sticky clear dressing, and a bandage will be placed over the top of this to further protect it. In some cases your child may have a splint to help support and protect the area where the cannula is placed, for example to prevent it from becoming kinked if it has been placed at a joint such as the wrist, elbow or ankle.

### How to care for your child's cannula

- Make sure the bandage covers the cannula completely
- When bathing or washing your child, make sure the bandage and cannula dressing remains dry. **Do not get it wet**
- Avoid letting your child pull at their cannula.
- Take care when removing and putting on clothing.
- Ensure your child is supervised when playing, to prevent knocking or pulling of the cannula.
- Do not take the sticky dressing off yourself. The nurse will check the dressing and cannula every time medication is given.
- Ensure your child's fingers are visible beneath the bandage.
- If there is a plastic splint in place, make sure that the fingers are not curled up inside the bandage or being squashed onto the splint.

### Things to look out for with your child's cannula and in relation to the medication

If your child seems to be crying more than usual and you do not know why, it may be due to problems with the cannula, or a reaction to the medication, which must be checked out. Contact your care centre to inform them what has happened so that they can arrange for a new one to be inserted if needed. For example:

- Check that the fingers (or toes if cannula is in the foot) are nice and pink. If they look discoloured, eg. Purple, blue, or swollen - carefully unwind the bandage yourself, rewind it loosely and contact or return to the hospital **immediately**.
- The cannula has become dislodged
- The skin around the cannula is red, hot, sore, swollen, puffy, white or hard
- There is a noticeable red line above the cannula site that follows a vein

- Your child has pain around or at cannula site, or in the arm or foot where the cannula is sited
- The cannula site has fluid or blood leaking from it
- Your child has a rash, red flushed face, or any itching
- Your child has a high temperature

## What to do if there is a problem with your child's cannula

Firstly, please do not panic. If your child's cannula comes out, apply pressure to the site with a clean tissue or cloth. Once it has stopped bleeding cover with a plaster. Contact your care centre to inform them what has happened so that they can arrange for a new one to be inserted if needed.

## Contact details

CONQUEST HOSPITAL		EASTBOURNE DGH	
Kipling Ward	01424 758039	Friston SSPAU	01323 414946
Kipling SSPAU	01424 757507		01323 435766

## Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the Patient Experience Team – Tel: (01323) 417400 Ext: 5860 or by email at: [esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net)

## Hand hygiene

The trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

## Other formats

**If you require any of the Trust leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department.**

**Tel: (01424) 755255 Ext: 2620**

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

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## Reference

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:  
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 Women's and Children's Division.

Next review date: July 2020  
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