

VASCULAR ACCESS

Lifecath Midline

PATIENT CARE GUIDE



About Midline Catheters

During your treatment you may need to have repeated blood samples, and be given non-irritating drugs or fluids frequently or for an extended period. These are usually done via a vein in your arm, but inserting a needle or cannula each time can cause damage to your veins, which can be very painful for you.

To give you the best care, your healthcare professional has decided to use a midline catheter, which can be left in place and used repeatedly. You will normally be given a midline catheter when you need frequent doses, and if your treatment is expected to last for 1 week or longer. The midline catheter will usually be connected to an extension set to deliver medication.

Your Catheter

You have been given a Lifecath Midline catheter: Lifecath Midline is made from polyurethane, which is a flexible material that softens at body temperature making it a comfortable way of delivering your treatment.

Your Lifecath Midline catheter may be single or double lumen. This means that it has either one, or two holes running the full length of the catheter.

A double lumen catheter will be used if you will need to have more than one infusion running at the same time and don't want the two liquids to mix in the tube, or if your nurse might need to take a blood sample while an infusion is being given.

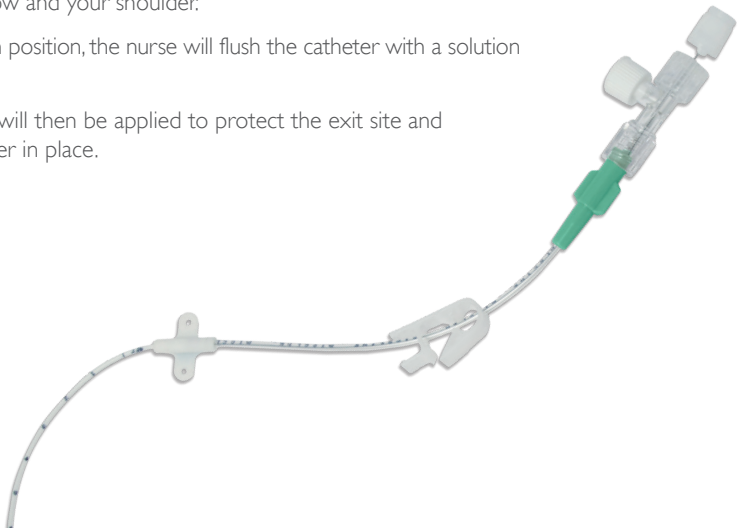
Provided that your Lifecath Midline catheter is correctly inserted and is cared for properly, it can be left in place as long as it is needed, until your treatment is complete.

How is your Lifecath Midline Catheter inserted?

Your Lifecath Midline catheter will be inserted in hospital by a nurse specialist or doctor. Local anaesthetic may be used to numb the skin, then the catheter is inserted into a vein between your elbow and your shoulder.

Once your catheter is in position, the nurse will flush the catheter with a solution to prevent clotting.

A clear sterile dressing will then be applied to protect the exit site and to help hold the catheter in place.



Caring for your Lifecath Midline Catheter at home

Once discharged home, your line will be taken care of by your community district nurse. The following information will be useful, but you should always follow any instructions given to you by your healthcare professional.

Care of the exit site

Check the exit site for any swelling, redness or pain. The troubleshooting guide on the opposite page will help, but if you are in any doubt you should contact your healthcare professional.

Soiled, wet or loose dressings

Your dressing will need to be changed as soon as possible. Please contact your Community District Nurse or Vascular Access Specialist Practitioner.

Bathing and showers

You can bathe and shower while you have a Lifecath Midline, but you must take care to keep the catheter and dressing dry. Cover the entire dressing with an additional waterproof dressing, clingfilm or plastic bag and secure all of the edges with tape. Ask your healthcare professional for any further recommendations.

Glossary of Terms

Catheter

A special plastic tube inserted into your arm, to deliver drugs and infusions straight into your vein.

Exit site

Where the catheter enters your skin.

Phlebitis

Irritation to the vein and surrounding skin.

Extension

Tubing connected to the catheter to help with infusion of drugs and fluids.

Peripheral

Relating to, or situated near the surface of the body.

I.V. drug therapy

Intravenous drugs administered directly into the vein.

Polyurethane catheter

A special plastic tube made of a soft material, inserted into your vein to deliver drugs and infusions.

Healthcare Professional

The doctor or nurse looking after your Lifecath Midline catheter.

Handwashing Technique

A nine step handwashing technique was devised by Ayliffe et al (1978), and it is used regularly by healthcare professionals. Using it yourself may improve the care of your catheter. The technique uses soap or an antiseptic solution and running water; and each step consists of five strokes forward and five backward.



○..... **Step One**

Wet hands thoroughly before applying washing agent.



.....○ **Step Two**

Rub palm to palm.



○..... **Step Three**

Right palm over back of left hand and left palm over back of right hand.



.....○ **Step Four**

Palm to palm with fingers interlaced.



○ **Step Five**

Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked.

Step Six ○

Wash each thumb by clasping and rotating in the palm of the opposite hand.



○ **Step Seven**

Rotational rubbing back and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa.



Step Eight ○

Rinse hands under running water:



○ **Step Nine**

Dry hands thoroughly.



Troubleshooting

Air entering the bloodstream

Symptoms

You experience shortness of breath, chest pain, coughing.

What to do

Position yourself on your left side with your head down. Call emergency services immediately.

The catheter breaks or you accidentally cut the catheter

Symptoms

Blood leaking from catheter or extension.

What to do

Secure both ends of the catheter if possible, cover with an airtight dressing. Contact your healthcare provider immediately.

Skin infection or soreness

Symptoms

You will notice redness, swelling and tenderness at catheter exit site.

What to do

Contact your healthcare professional. Always follow the correct Guidelines Procedure for handling and cleaning catheter, as instructed by your healthcare professional.

Catheter blocked / infusion stops

Symptoms

Drug or infusion will not flow through the catheter.

What to do

Contact your healthcare professional. You may have a clot in the catheter. Your healthcare professional may infuse a drug to dissolve the clot or remove the catheter.

Phlebitis

Symptoms

Small area of redness can be seen around catheter exit site and radiating up the arm.

What to do

Contact your healthcare professional. Phlebitis can be successfully solved with early treatment.

Leaking of blood or fluid

Symptoms

Possible hole in catheter or extension.

What to do

Cover the hole in the catheter with an airtight dressing and contact your healthcare provider immediately.

Important Information

Your Lifecath Midline Information

Code number: _____

Length: _____ Date of insertion: ____ / ____ / ____

In case of queries please contact:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Special Instructions

Your healthcare professional may ask you to help with the following procedures:

1. Dressing changes every ____ days (unless it becomes wet or falls off).
2. Your catheter should be flushed every ____ days and after drug administration.
3. Your own instructions: _____

For further information, please contact: info@vygon.co.uk

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