



**Intensive Community Care and Community  
Hospitals**

# **Cannula Care for Patients**

# Cannula Care for Patients

You have been sent home with a cannula to enable us to give your treatment and care either in your own home, or closer to home, rather than in hospital.

## What is an intravenous (IV) cannula

An intravenous cannula is a small flexible plastic tube inserted into a vein in your hand or arm. This enables medication, including fluids, to be given directly into your bloodstream.

## Taking care of your cannula

A cannula can remain in place for up to 96 hours providing that it remains clean, dry, and free from signs of infection. The cannula is secured with a waterproof dressing and then bandaged to provide further protection to prevent it from being accidentally pulled out.

## Advice

- Avoid getting the cannula wet - you should cover the bandage with clingfilm when bathing or showering.
- Avoid bending your wrist or elbow depending on the position of the cannula.
- Do not go swimming with the cannula in place.
- Keep hands clean and avoid gardening and handling pets.
- Wear loose clothing to avoid accidentally catching your cannula.

## Complications

If you have any concerns, contact the team caring for you. If it is after 5pm, call the Out of Hours services call 111.

Let them know if you experience one or all of the following:

- Pain or stinging around the cannula site.
- Fluid or blood leaking from the cannula site.
- Swelling, heat or redness at the site of your cannula or redness spreading over your arm.

**Name of care team**.....

**Telephone number** .....

## What to do if the cannula comes out

If this happens there may be some bleeding from the site

 **DO NOT PANIC!**

- Apply firm pressure over the site using a clean cloth or kitchen towel, elevating the arm until it stops bleeding.
- Do not attempt to reinsert the cannula.
- If you are on blood thinning medication (i.e. warfarin, aspirin, clopidogrel, apixaban) you may have to apply pressure longer for the bleeding to stop.
- If the bleeding does not stop, contact one of the following services:
  - Out of Hours service call 111
  - In severe cases call 999

# Accessibility

An accessible version of this leaflet can be found on our website: [www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/leaflets](http://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/leaflets)

## Get in touch

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## Feedback

Our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) provides advice and support to patients, families, and carers, helping to resolve any problems, concerns, or complaints you may have.

Phone        0800 328 7971

Email        [PALS@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk](mailto:PALS@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk)

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