

# Removing Your Tunnelled (Cuffed) Haemodialysis Catheter

## Introduction

This leaflet is about the procedure required to remove your tunnelled haemodialysis catheter. It is intended to provide you with the information you need before you agree to have the procedure performed. It does not replace discussion between you and your doctor or the renal access nurse specialist. Please ask all the questions you need to ensure that you fully understand what is involved, before you give your consent for your catheter to be removed.

## Why am I having my tunnelled dialysis catheter removed?

There are many reasons why your tunnelled dialysis catheter is to be removed such as:

- infection
- thrombosis (blood clot)
- Catheter blockage
- it is no longer required.

If you are unsure about the reasons for the removal of your line, please ask your nurse or doctor.

## Who will remove the catheter and where will it be done?

A kidney specialist (Consultant) or a trainee kidney specialist (Specialist Registrar) or a specially trained nurse will do the procedure. The operator performing the procedure may be different to the one who recommended the procedure to you, but they will be happy to answer your questions. It will be done in a special procedures room in the renal unit in the Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust. It is done under local

anaesthetic, so you will remain awake. You can eat and drink before and after the procedure.

## Will I need a blood test?

A recent blood tests will be required to ensure that your blood will clot properly after the procedure.

## How is the tunnelled dialysis catheter removed?

The nurse from the kidney unit giving your treatment or the doctor will arrange a date and time for this to happen.

Because the catheter is designed not to fall out, it has a cuff which adheres to the underneath layer of skin. The catheter will need to be gently released. The area of skin around the cuff will be cleaned and then made numb (so that it is not painful) with an injection of local anaesthetic. This injection stings slightly as it goes in, but goes numb very quickly. When it is completely numb, the operator will make a small cut in your skin. This will allow the cuff to be loosened from the underneath of the skin. You may feel a bit of pressure, but it will not hurt. Once the cuff is freed, the line will come out easily. The operator will take the line out when you are performing a breathing technique, which they will explain to you. They will tell you exactly when and what they would like you to do. They will gently press where the line went into the vein (under your neck) for about 10 minutes. You will have 2-3 stitches in your skin. The operator will ask you to rest on the bed for 2 hours. A dressing will cover the wound. It can be changed and replaced with a new dressing if necessary. This dressing must be kept clean and dry. If you are unsure how to change this dressing, please discuss this with a nurse. Once the stitches are removed, no dressing is required.



## How long it will take?

The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by RD&E staff undertaking procedures at the RD&E hospitals.

© Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust

Designed by Graphics (Print & Design), RD&E