NHS
Royal Devon
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Disconnecting the chemotherapy infusion pump from a PICC line

Other formats

If you need this leaflet in another format such as Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service:

- 01392 402093 (for Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter services)
- 01271 314090 (for North Devon services)
- rduh.pals@nhs.net

Introduction

This booklet provides the step-by-step process for safely removing a chemotherapy infusion pump (elastomeric pump) from a PICC line. Patients or their nominated person (this might be a relative or friend) are able to perform this task where deemed appropriate by the nursing team after adequate training.

Definitions

PICC line: a peripherally-inserted central catheter is a thin, flexible tube inserted into a vein in the upper arm and threaded toward the heart. It is used to deliver fluids, medications or blood transfusions directly into the bloodstream.

Elastomeric pump: this is a medical device that uses pressure to infuse medication. It is also called a balloon pump. Commonly used to administer the chemotherapy drug Fluorouracil (5FU).

Training

Where a person is identified, they will accompany the patient for the first cycle disconnection (or next cycle if already mid-way through treatment) to receive training and be given all required information (to include instructions and competency form).

On the following cycle the identified person will accompany the patient in order to be assessed. If not deemed competent at this stage, they will be invited to attend again for supervised practice until competent.

It is very important that the correct procedure is followed to reduce risks such as introducing infection to the PICC line (from unclean hands or equipment) or accidental exposure of toxic chemotherapy to the nominated person performing the task.

Step-by-step guide

1. Make sure the infusion balloon is deflated (don't be concerned if the balloon is not fully deflated as it is normal for a small residue to remain). If the balloon hasn't deflated at all contact the hospital for advice.
2. Wash your hands.
3. Lay out on a clean surface or tray all the items you will need:

   1x gloves

   1x apron

   1x chlorhexidine wipe

   1x 10ml pre-filled syringe of 0.9% Normal Saline.

   Have your purple bag or purple-lidded sharps bin nearby.

   If you are receiving your treatment in Exeter, you will have a purple bag.

   If you are receiving your treatment in Barnstaple, you will have a purple-lidded bin.
4. Remove the tubifast bandage from the PICC line, and peel off any adhesive dressing over the shoulder/chest area holding the sensor of the infusion line in place.
5. Locate the white clamp on the line and click it shut.
6. Wash your hands again and put on the apron and gloves.
7. Unscrew the infusion line from the bung at the end of the PICC line, make sure you leave the needle free bung attached to the PICC.
8. Place the line and infusion bottle directly into the purple bag or purple-lidded sharps bin.
9. Use the chlorhexidine wipe to clean the end of the needle free bung. Rub for 30 seconds and leave to dry for 30 seconds.
10. Take the prefilled saline syringe and expel any excess air from the top. TIP-pull the plunger back to release pressure before expelling air. Connect it to the bung using a screw action.
11. Flush the line by pressing on the plunger using a push pause technique, until the syringe is empty.

    Remove and discard.

    Purple bag (Exeter): All waste goes into the purple bag (including gloves and apron) and seal the purple bag tightly using the black tag.

Purple-lidded sharps bin (Barnstaple): Non-contaminated waste (packaging, gloves, apron, empty syringe) can go into normal household waste. However, in the event of any contamination (spill of chemotherapy) these items need to go into the purple-lidded sharps bin.

12. Replace the tubifast bandage over the PICC line.

13. Don't forget to store the purple bag/purple-lidded sharps bin in a safe place out of the reach of children and return it to us in the chemo unit on your next visit.

Further information

You can access a video link which talks through this procedure from the Royal Marsden Hospital on: **https://vimeo.com/160874886**

Be mindful that the equipment used/colour of equipment differs from what we use in our hospital.

Who to contact

Exeter Cancer Services

Non-Urgent Advice Line: **01392 402876** (answerphone)
Monday – Friday, 8am – 5pm

Nurse for urgent advice: **07825 401 059** (24hours/7 days a week)

Barnstaple

Seamoor Unit: **01271 311579**
Monday – Friday, 8am – 6pm

Acute Oncology Service: 01271 334478
Open 7 days, 8am – 6pm

Out of Hours: **02171 322577**
Explain you have cancer and are receiving treatment.

Your notes

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern, please contact PALS:

- 01392 402093 (for Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter services)
- 01271 314090 (for North Devon services)
- rduh.pals@nhs.net

Have your say

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You can also share your feedback on the Care Opinion website at www.careopinion.org.uk or freephone 0800 122 3135.

Scan the QR code to visit the Care Opinion website →

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