

# Intravenous Cannula in the Home

**HITH** Hospital In  
The Home  
*Treating patients safely at home*

## Intravenous Cannula in the Home

An Intravenous cannula is a hollow soft plastic tube inserted into a vein usually in the hand or arm. It is inserted to receive intravenous medications for certain medical conditions.

The cannula is inserted by a trained and credentialed health professional.

**Please advise your doctor if you feel you cannot care for your Intravenous cannula at home. Call the HITH office and advise that the dressing is not secure.**

**Business Hours (06:30am-21:30pm) 3049 1414 or After Hours (21:30pm-06:30am) 1800 108 668**



## How to care for your intravenous cannula?

**Please do not touch** the intravenous cannula. Dressings applied onto the intravenous cannula keeps it in place and helps to prevent infection. They are **not** waterproof so must be kept clean and dry.

You can use your arm normally but ensure that the cannula is intact.

### Due to bleeding and infection risks; do not:

- touch the intravenous cannula
- use the arm with the intravenous cannula especially if lifting any objects
- remove any parts of the intravenous cannula or the cannula itself
- allow children to play or tamper with the intravenous cannula
- allow pets to be around the intravenous cannula site
- allow the intravenous cannula to become wet
- swim or immerse the intravenous cannula cannula/dressing in water
- apply household tapes to the dressing
- remove the dressing, even if it gets wet or is loose and lifting. *If the dressing does become loose or lifts than gently wrap it in cling film (e.g. Gladwrap) or a loose covering over the site and.*

## If you are needing to go to work

You **must** gain permission from your employer and your treating team to attend your workplace with an intravenous cannula in place. If you intend to work with the intravenous cannula, you may need to change your work pattern.

### Avoid:

- heavy lifting involving the arm with the cannula
- tasks that will dirty or wet the dressing
- tasks that may catch or pull out the intravenous cannula.



### How to bathe or shower if an intravenous cannula is in place?

- Gently wrap cling film or a plastic bag around the arm/hand and secure the end(s) with tape.
- Be careful not to bump or knock out the cannula when washing or drying yourself.
- Gently **pat** the dressing and area around the intravenous cannula dry, **do not** rub.

### What to do if the cannula comes out?

- **Do not** try and put the cannula back in your vein.
- Notify your HITH team as soon as possible that your cannula has come out.
- Apply firm pressure over the site with cotton wool or gauze.
- **If bleeding stops**, put a waterproof dressing or band-aid and notify your HITH team.
- **If the bleeding does not stop**, contact the HITH team immediately whilst applying firm pressure on the area. HITH Team will come out and review.
- Observe the insertion site for the next few days.

### What to look out for in relation to the intravenous cannula?

Observe the following symptoms around the insertion site:

- Pain/ discomfort, itchiness, irritation
- Redness, blistering/ rash
- Pus, swelling or lumps
- Fever or feel increasingly generally unwell
- And, Check the bung is not causing any pressure on your skin

If the intravenous cannula is not suited to the treatment the doctor may advise a different type of intravenous cannula device or a change to tablet therapy.

The intravenous cannula may need to be removed and or replaced with a new one if signs of infection or pain are present. Intravenous cannula may only be left in place for a maximum of 7 days.

## Emergency contacts and for more information

**Emergency: 000**

**HITH Contact Numbers:**

**3049 1414 (6:30am to 9:30pm)**

**1800 108 668 (9:30pm to 6:30am)**

