

FACTSHEET

This fact sheet is for education purposes only. Please consult with your doctor or other health professionals to make sure this information is right for your child. If you would like to provide feedback on this fact sheet, please visit: www.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/parents-and-carers/fact-sheets/feedback-form.

Care of the intravenous cannula at home

What is a cannula?

A cannula is a small, short piece of plastic tube that is put directly into the vein to give medications or fluids. It is **not** a needle. A short plastic extension tube is then attached to the cannula to protect the cannula and make giving medication easier. It should be taped down with a clear dressing so the cannula can be seen. It may be covered with a soft sock-like bandage for extra protection.

Why is my child going home with a cannula?

If your child is medically stable but needs to have further intravenous (IV) medication, your doctor may send your child home with the cannula in.

You may need to bring your child back to hospital for treatment or a hospital in the home (HITH) nurses may come to your home to give medication.

How do I care for the cannula at home?

- Do not touch the cannula unless necessary.
- Do not take the tape off.
- Do not pull at the cannula.
- Do not inject anything into the cannula.
- Do not get the cannula or dressing wet. Your child can still bath or shower but keep the cannula out of the water and cover the cannula with a plastic bag and sticky tape.

What to do if there is problem with the cannula

1. If the cannula comes out;

- Do not panic.
- There may be some bleeding. Apply gentle pressure on the area with a clean cloth or gauze.
- The bleeding will stop and you can apply a bandaid.
- Contact the hospital on the number given at the end of this factsheet.

2. If the cannula becomes disconnected from the extension piece;

- Some bleeding may occur from the cannula. Apply pressure with gauze or a clean cloth to the cannula where it enters the skin.
- Do not reconnect the tubing.
- Contact the hospital on the numbers given at the end of this factsheet urgently.

3. The site around the cannula becomes red/painful/swollen/hard/puffy/hot;

- If any of the above symptoms occur, contact the hospital immediately on the numbers given at the end of the factsheet, or present to the Emergency Department.

Contact details

HITH Service (Westmead):

Contact Times: 7.30am to 9.30pm 7 days a week

Contact Numbers:

Office: 98453857

Morning nurse mobile: 0417226650

Afternoon nurse mobile: 0419226590

HITH Service (Randwick):

Contact times: 7.30am to 9.30pm 7 days a week

Contact numbers:

Office: 9382 0223

Moring nurse Mobile: 0418760411

Afternoon nurse Mobile: 0409954567

After hours please phone:

The Children's Hospital at Westmead on 98450000, or

The Sydney Children's Hospital Randwick on 93821111

and ask to be transferred to the Emergency

Department for further instructions.