

How should I look after the PVC?

Keep the area clean and dry and do not touch it. Try not to bump the PVC.

- Don't wear jewellery such as watches on the same side as the PVC.
- Take care when removing clothing to stop the PVC being moved. Try to wear loose clothing.
- Tell a member of staff if:
 - the dressing becomes wet, dirty, stained, loose or falls off.
 - the area becomes red, painful or swollen around the PVC.
 - the area bleeds
 - you feel hot, cold or shivery.
- If the PVC is no longer being used for medications or fluids, ask the staff if it can be removed.

Information about Peripheral Venous Catheter (PVC)



What is a PVC?

An intravenous (IV) PVC is a small plastic tube that is inserted through the skin into a vein in the arm, hand or leg (for young children it may be through a vein in the scalp). This allows healthcare staff to give you IV fluids and medicines. You may need more than 1 PVC at the same time and staff will explain this to you.

Why do I need a PVC?

- Your doctor may have prescribed IV fluids and medicines, which may be the best or the only way for you to get the treatment. The treatment may be given through an infusion (drip) or using a syringe.
- You may need the PVC for anaesthetic medicines or for a diagnostic test where contrast media (dye) or other substances need to be injected.

How will the PVC be put in?

Healthcare staff will explain the treatment, ask for your verbal consent and tell you about what to expect so that you can report any side effects or problems.

The member of staff inserting the PVC will take precautions to help prevent infection. They will do this by:

- Performing hand hygiene and putting on clean gloves and a plastic apron
- Carefully cleaning the skin where the PVC is going to be inserted
- Using a sterile PVC
- Using a technique which reduces the risk of infection

Staff insert the PVC into the vein using a fine needle which they then remove to leave the PVC in the vein. There may be a sharp pain as the needle goes in, but this should stop once the PVC is in place. If the pain continues, tell the member of staff who is inserting the PVC. Once inserted, staff will apply a sterile dressing and flush the PVC with saline to check that it is in the vein. The fluid may feel cool as it goes in.

How will the staff look after the PVC?

They will:

- Check that your dressing covering the PVC is clean, dry and secure and replace it as necessary.
- Check that the PVC is working properly and the skin around it is not red or painful before giving any treatment.
- Inspect the PVC at least twice a day while still in use and record this in the PVC care plan.
- Clean the bung with a Chlorhexadine or antimicrobial impregnated wipe before using it.
- Remove the PVC if it becomes red, painful or swollen or when it is no longer needed and before you go home.