

Central Venous Catheter (CVC)

Permanent Pheresis (Medcomp®)

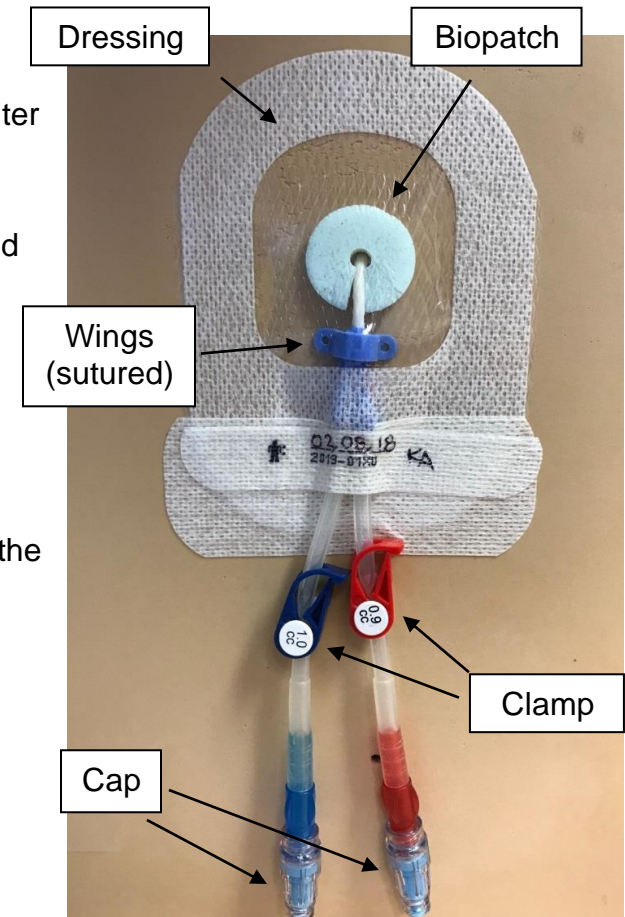


What is a Permanent Pheresis CVC?

- A permanent pheresis catheter is a type of central line with a soft plastic tube (catheter) that can be left in for a long time.
- It is placed in a large vein (vessel) near the heart. It is used for pheresis procedures that filter the blood, drawing blood or giving blood, medications, solutions (fluids), and IV nutrition.
- It is placed in the chest during a simple operation with general anesthesia.
- Part of the catheter, called the cuff, is located under the skin. The cuff keeps germs out and keeps the catheter in place.

What can I expect after surgery?

- The catheter must always be covered by a dressing.
- Avoid heavy lifting for 2 weeks after surgery.
- Special tapes/glue around the catheter and neck will come off on their own in 1-2 weeks.
- After the catheter has been in place for 48 hours, you can take a sponge bath. Do not get the catheter or dressing wet.
- If the patient is in pain, check temperature first. If there is no fever, you may give over-the-counter pain medicine as needed.
- It is normal for the sutures (stitches) to become looser over the next few months and eventually separate from the skin.



How do I use and care for the line?

- Always wash your hands for 30 seconds with antibacterial soap before handling the catheter.
- The dressing and caps will be changed every 7 days and as needed.
- Both lumens of the catheter will be flushed at least once a day.
- A medicine called alteplase will be put in the catheter every 14-21 days to keep it working well.
- Always cover the dressing and caps during bath/shower. Do not dunk the catheter under water. If the dressing gets wet, it needs to be changed.
- Only use medical dressings and tape that your child is not allergic to.
- No contact sports or rough play. This can cause damage to the catheter.
- Clamp both lumens when not in use. Always have disposable clamps available.
- Daily hygiene prevents infection. Brush teeth twice a day, bathe daily, and change bed linens once a week.

When do I call the doctor?

- Chills, fever, increased redness, tenderness (soreness) swelling, rash, bleeding, or pus at the catheter site.
- If the catheter does not flush normally, or any pain, swelling or leaking during flush.
- If the catheter has been accidentally pulled on, or if the sutures come off within the first 2 months.

What resources are available to help me?

- Family Resource Center offers a CVC class for caregivers.
- Primary care team can give you more information about taking care of the line, risks, and benefits.
- Child Life can help explain the procedure to your child and assist during dressing changes.