



Brigham and Women's Hospital

Angio/Interventional Radiology: (617) 732-6660

Operating Room: (617)-732 8880

Other contact numbers: _____

You've been scheduled to receive a Hickman catheter. This is an outpatient procedure that will happen at:

- Brigham and Women's Hospital Angio/Interventional Radiology
- Brigham and Women's Hospital Operating Room
- _____

How do I prepare for getting my Hickman catheter?

The week before:

- Prepare a list for your doctor including:
 - Prescription medicine that you take, including blood thinners
 - Vitamins and supplements
 - Over the counter medicines, including aspirin and ibuprofen (Motrin)
 - Allergies
 - Past surgeries
- Plan for someone –not a bus, taxi, or ride-share— to take you home after the procedure
- Ask if you will need infusion homecare services after your procedure
- You do not need to shave your chest
- Ask your cancer care team if you'll need to learn how to flush your catheter and change the dressing. If so, ask if you can practice next time you see them.

The day of:

- Don't eat or drink anything for 8 hours before your procedure
 - You may take your regularly prescribed medicines with a small sip of water
- Bring your list of medicines, allergies, past procedures, etc.

What happens during my procedure?

- Your care team will give you medicine to make you sleepy and help you stay more comfortable. This might be given through an IV in your hand or arm.
- The skin where the catheter will go will be cleaned and numbed.
- The doctor will make 2 small openings, for the catheter to enter and exit your body. The entrance will be in your lower neck, and the exit will be in your upper chest.
- You may have a few stitches at each opening

- Your doctor will tell you how long the stitches will stay in.
- Expect to be able to see end of the catheter a few inches outside your chest
- Check with your cancer care team about keeping your phone with you during the procedure so that you can call your ride when you're ready to leave

What happens after my procedure?

Taking care of pain:

- It's normal to have bruising, swelling, or pain around your Hickman catheter. It will probably go away in a few days.
- If your catheter is for stem cell collection or transplant, check with your transplant team about the best way to treat your pain
- For all other patients:
 - For mild pain, take acetaminophen (Tylenol). The most Tylenol you should take is 4,000 mg every 24 hours.
 - For strong pain, your doctor might prescribe narcotic medicine. Take it exactly as your doctor tells you to.
 - Narcotic pain medicines can make people feel sleepy and lightheaded. Don't drink alcohol, drive, or use machinery if you're taking a narcotic medicine.
- If your pain medicine plan isn't working, call your cancer care team.

What can I do after my procedure?

- You can usually eat and drink something light right away.
- You can shower the same day as your procedure, but you must keep the dressing dry. Further instructions at the end of this document.
- It can take 2-4 weeks to heal completely.
- While healing, you can slowly start your normal activities, with a few exceptions:
 - Don't do any contact sports, like football, hockey, or boxing.
 - Don't do any activities that use your upper chest muscles, like weightlifting, golf, bowling, tennis, or vacuuming.
 - It's fine to have sex, but make sure that your partner(s) does not pull on the catheter.

What signs and symptoms should I look out for?

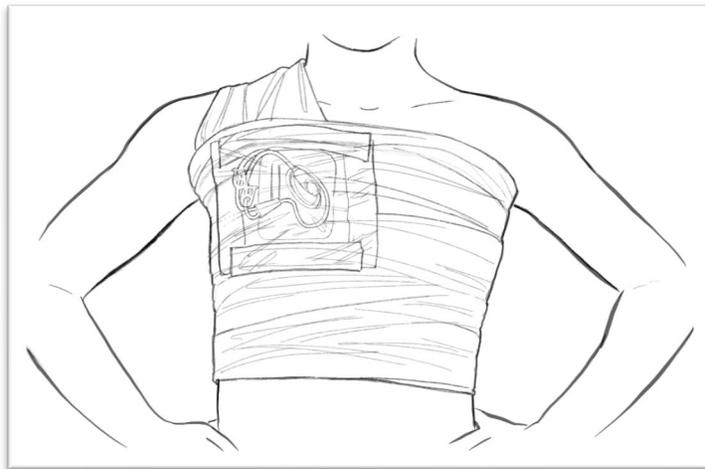
- If you notice any of the following signs, call your cancer care team immediately
- A fever of 100.5° F or higher
- Shaking and chills after you flush your catheter
- Redness, tenderness, bleeding, or drainage where your catheter is
- A skin rash under your bandages

GETTING YOUR HICKMAN CATHETER

- Pain, swelling, or numbness in your arm or neck on the same side as your catheter
- If your catheter cuff can be seen at the exit site
- Trouble flushing your catheter
 - If this happens, don't force it – this can cause your catheter to break
- Breaks, tears, or leaks in your catheter
 - If this happens, clamp the catheter between the damaged area and your body. Cover the catheter with a sterile piece of gauze and call your cancer care team immediately.
- If your dressing or catheter gets wet in the shower or tub

How do I shower with my Hickman catheter?

- You can shower the same day as your procedure, but you **must** completely cover your dressing and catheter and keep the dressing dry.
- Coil your catheter gently and cover it completely with plastic wrap and tape or a product like Press and Seal.



- Avoid facing the shower directly. Try to shower with your back facing the shower head.
- Your catheter cannot go underwater in a pool, tub, lake, etc., even if it's covered in plastic wrap
- If the dressing gets wet, it needs to be changed right away.

This document is for informational purposes only. The content is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.