

## Procedures/Diagnostic tests: Interventional Radiology

### *Tunneled Venous Access Device Placement*

You are scheduled for placement of a tunneled venous access device (VAD). The VAD is a thin tube (catheter) that allows your health care team to give you medication, draw blood, and do apheresis or dialysis. You may be able to keep this catheter for long-term use (1 year or longer).

To place this device, the doctor will put an intravenous tube in your neck vein or in a vein under your collarbone (subclavian). These veins lead to a large vein called the superior vena cava, a large vein near your heart. The doctor will also make a place called a “tunnel” for the tube’s openings to come out of your body.

#### **Preparation**

- You will need a history and physical (H & P) no more than 30 days before your procedure.
- If you take aspirin, ibuprofen (Motrin), naproxen (Aleve), or blood thinning medicines, ask your doctor if you should continue taking them.
- You will have blood drawn, usually no more than 7 days before your procedure.
- Please do not eat anything after midnight. You may be able to drink a small amount of clear liquids such as water, clear tea, or black coffee up to 2 hours before your procedure.
- Please ask your doctor if you should take your regular medications at their regular time with a sip of water before your procedure.

#### ***Immediately before the procedure:***

- When you arrive in the Interventional Radiology section, the radiologist and nurse will discuss the procedure with you and answer your questions.
- They will ask you to sign a consent form giving permission to do the procedure.
- You will change into a hospital gown (if you are not already wearing one).
- Any procedure that breaks the skin has a risk of bleeding or infection. To reduce these problems, we check the results of your blood work and clean your skin with antiseptic soap.

#### **Procedure**

- Your nurses and/or interventional radiology technologist will attach you to monitors to assess your vital signs.
- Your nurse may start an intravenous line if you do not already have one.

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- Your skin will be cleansed and draped with sterile towels. Do not touch the cleansed site or towels.
  - Patients generally receive local anesthesia, which may be combined with moderate sedation. This may make you drowsy, and your nurse will check you closely to keep you comfortable.
  - The radiologist will use ultrasound and x rays to put the catheter in the right place.

***Immediately after the procedure***

- After your tunneled line is done, you will have 1 or 2 small dressings placed on the site.
- You will be returned to your room or out patient clinic.
- If you have stitches at your catheter insertion site (near your collarbone), they will be removed in about 10 to 14 days.  
The stitches where the VAD comes out will be removed in about 6 weeks if you still have the catheter, Your clinic or patient care giver will show you how to take care of the catheter.

Some radiologists use a medical "super glue" instead of stitches. The glue will slowly fall off your skin as it heals.

You received a central line catheter on (date):\_\_\_\_\_.

We took x rays to confirm your catheter’s location, and the catheter is ready to use.

The medications you received for your procedure included:

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**After the procedure**

- The site may be tender, bruised or swollen for the next 2 to 3 days.
- The dressings may be reinforced with gauze and tape, but should not be changed for 24 hours unless it becomes blood soaked. If bleeding continues after the dressing is reinforced, call your clinic doctor.
- Stitches help hold your catheter in place. You may return to us or go to your primary care giver remove the stitches.

Neck stitches removed (date): \_\_\_\_\_

Catheter stitches removed (date): \_\_\_\_\_

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## Special instructions

Please call your clinic doctor if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Temperature or chills as directed by your clinic (often 38.5 C or 101 F)
- Redness, swelling, excessive bleeding, or drainage at the catheter site
- Unrelieved or increasing pain at the catheter site
- Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
- Swelling, burning, or severe pain in the arm, shoulder or neck on the side where the catheter was placed
- If you have routine questions or concerns please contact your clinic doctor or nurse

If you have any symptoms that you feel are severe, and you cannot contact your NIH doctor, call 911 or go to your closest emergency room and bring this sheet.

NIH Clinic/Doctor \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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9/09

4/10

