

Going home with a cannula from the Trauma Assessment Unit

What is a cannula?

A cannula is a small plastic tube that has been placed into a vein in your arm or your hand in order to deliver your intravenous therapy. This treatment may be given in the community or you may need to return to the hospital to receive it. Your cannula should be replaced every 72 hours or removed by a nurse once venous access is no longer required (or earlier if a problem occurs). However, staff may have a valid reason for leaving the cannula in for longer; this will be explained to you. To help with cannula replacement, the dressing will have the date written on it of when the cannula was inserted.

How will your cannula be held in place?

Your cannula will have been fixed to your skin with a special 'see through' dressing. This is so we can observe the site and monitor for any signs of inflammation. The dressing should be changed by the nursing staff if soiled or loose.

Additional dressings such as bandages/tubifast may be used to protect the cannula. If bandages are used, staff will remove these on a regular basis to check the cannula.

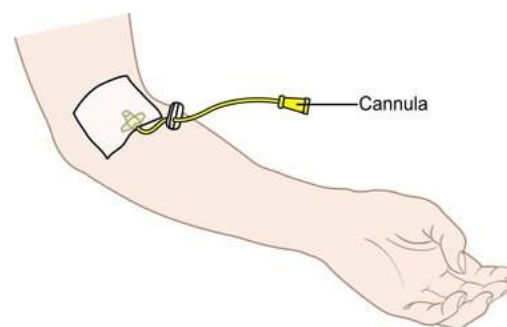
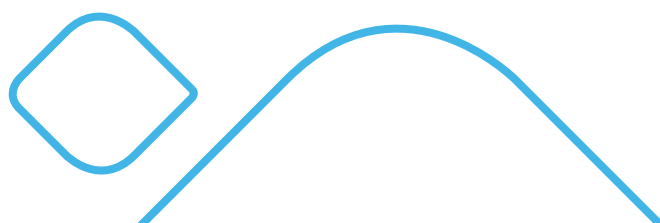


Diagram showing a cannula
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What can you do to help?

Inform staff if your cannula dressing is soiled or loose. The dressing is splash-proof, however, we recommend that you try to keep it dry. If the dressing gets wet, carefully pat it dry. Report any pain, swelling or redness at the cannula site to a nurse when you come back into hospital when they visit. If there is a lot of pain or swelling, please contact us immediately using the details in this leaflet. We may recommend you come back sooner than planned for a review.



What if the cannula becomes displaced?

The cannula will be removed at the end of your treatment by the nursing staff. **Do not** try to remove the cannula yourself. If the cannula falls out, please do not attempt to reinsert the cannula. Elevate your arm and apply firm pressure over the site with a gauze swab or cotton wool for 3 minutes. Apply a small waterproof plaster to the site.

If there is ongoing bleeding that will not stop, please call 999 for emergency assistance.

If you require any further information or have concerns about your cannula, please speak to one of the nursing staff or call either of the following numbers:

Trauma Assessment Unit (open 8.00am-8.00pm every day): 01225 824388

Out of hours: RUH Switchboard 01225 428331 and request the orthopaedic on call doctor

Trauma Assessment Unit (B1)
Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust
Combe Park, Bath, BA1 3NG
Hospital switchboard: 01225 428331 | www.ruh.nhs.uk

If you would like this leaflet in email form, large print, braille or another language, please contact the Patient Support and Complaints team on 01225 825656.

Acknowledgment

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