

## What happens if my cannula falls out?

### Firstly don't panic ...

There will most likely be some bleeding. Apply a tissue to the site and press firmly down on the site. Call or have someone get a member of staff.

### Watch out and tell nurses and doctor if you get

Soreness or pain near the tube  
The skin near the tube gets red and hot  
There is crusting/ scabs where the tube is placed  
The tube is still in but it has not been used in a day  
You feel shivery or feel suddenly unwell

Continue to use your hand/arm with care. Be careful when changing clothes. Please do not disconnect the fluids yourself. Please do not touch the cannula or allow your friends/family to touch it or the dressing. Please do not pull the cannula or any drips that may be attached to it. Always wash your hands after using the toilet or blowing your nose.

## At home after the cannula has been removed.

Remove the dressing after 24 hours. Check the site where the cannula was for redness or swelling. Contact your GP if you have fever or chills

### How can I contact a member of the Infection Prevention & Control Team?

Tell the Clinical Nurse Manager, doctor or nurse looking after you if you would like to speak to a member of the Infection Prevention and Control Team and they will contact us.

Additional information can be found at :  
<http://intranet.tuh.ie/departments/IPC/Pages/home.aspx>

We have made every possible effort to make sure that all the information provided in this leaflet is true, accurate, complete and up to date at the time of publication.

Version 3

Reference:<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/.../guidelines/File,14834,en.pdf>  
[www.hse.ie/infectioncontrol](http://www.hse.ie/infectioncontrol)

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PATIENT  
INFORMATION  
LEAFLET

## Intravenous Peripheral Cannula (IPC)



## What is a peripheral cannula and what is it used for?



A peripheral cannula is also known as a drip or IV line. A cannula is a short flexible tube containing a needle which pierces the skin into a peripheral vein. The needle is then removed but the tube remains in place. This allows the Health care worker to give medication, fluids and blood products directly into your vein, as prescribed. They are very commonly used in hospitals and are now also being used in patients own homes.

## Does my cannula ever need to be replaced?

Your cannula should be replaced if a problem occurs. Please alert your nurse if you notice issues with it. When a peripheral intravenous cannula is no longer required, it should be removed. A cannula should be re-sited or removed when clinically indicated and not routinely.

## How will my cannula be held in place?

Your cannula will be secured with a sterile, transparent, semi permeable dressing.

## How should my cannula be cared for?

The staff who are inserting and accessing your cannula will have cleaned their hands; this will reduce the risk to you of getting an infection. If you are unsure whether they have done so, please feel free to ask "have you cleaned your hands?"

The point where the cannulas enters your skin must be kept clean and dry, please see your nurse for advice/assistance before having a bath or shower.

## When can my cannula be removed?

Your cannula is removed when there is no longer a need for it. A healthcare worker will remove the cannula which comes out easily, this creates an "exit" site. A dry sterile dressing will be placed over the exit site and this dressing will be removed after 24 hours.

Your cannula must be removed before you go home unless it is part of your treatment plan. Please make sure the doctors and nurses have discussed this with you before you go home.

## Are there any risks or side effects?

This is usually a safe procedure. However, as with all invasive procedures there are some risks. Only staff trained in this procedure will insert the cannula.

- **Failure to insert:** On some occasions it may be difficult to insert a cannula. This may result in several attempts.
- **Blood clot:** On rare occasions, a blood clot can collect around the end of a cannula.
- **Bruising or bleeding:** As with any procedure that involves the insertion of a cannula into a vein, some bruising or bleeding may occur. The amount of bruising or bleeding may be affected by your medical condition, or by the drugs you are taking.
- **Blocked cannula:** Your cannula may block, this will prevent it from being used. If it cannot be unblocked it may need to be replaced.
- **Irritation of the vein (phlebitis):** Some patients might have pain and redness along the length of the vein in which the cannula sits.
- **Nerve, tendon and artery injuries:** On very rare occasions during insertion the catheter may touch off a nerve, tendon or artery near to a vein causing some injury. As previously mentioned this is very rare.