The HICKMAN® intravenous catheter is a tube made of soft silicone. It has a Dacron cuff under the skin that is designed to help tissue grow around it, acting as an internal ‘stitch’ to hold the catheter in place.

It has two tubes (lumens) which lie inside a casing. The ends of each lumen have a hub which is coloured. RED is the larger tube and WHITE is the smaller tube. Each lumen has a clamp to prevent air entering the catheter when your luer plugs are changed.

Generally the RED lumen is used to take blood samples and give blood products. The WHITE lumen is used for medications and IV fluids. Each lumen has a positive displacement device. This prevents any backflow of blood into the catheter tip which can cause it to block.

**HICKMAN® Catheter**

**Positive Displacement Device**

![Image of HICKMAN® Catheter Positive Displacement Device]

**Why do we use a HICKMAN® Catheter?**

- It allows us to give all your IV medications and to take your blood samples.
- It reduces the need to insert needles into your arm veins making treatments more comfortable for you.
- It can remain in place for up to a year or more.
- It gives you freedom to use your arms normally in all your daily activities.
- It allows us to give you more than one drug at a time without the drugs mixing before they reach your blood stream.

**How is my HICKMAN® Catheter Inserted?**

Before going to have the HICKMAN® catheter inserted, you need to drink at least 1-2 litres of fluids for four hours beforehand. Alternatively you may be given intravenous fluids through a small cannula which is placed in an arm vein. The reason for this is to increase the volume of fluid in your large veins making it easier to insert the catheter.

The HICKMAN® catheter is inserted in the Radiology Department by a specialist doctor called a Radiologist. This may be done as a day procedure or as an inpatient.

The procedure will be explained to you before obtaining your written consent. A local anaesthetic is used to numb the skin area where the catheter is to be inserted. It takes 20-30 minutes to insert the catheter. Once in place the HICKMAN® catheter is flushed to make sure it is working properly.
A BIOPATCH® is placed around the insertion site to help prevent infection, then a sterile see-through dressing is placed over the top. Another sterile dressing is placed over the small incision at the base of your neck. This incision is needed so the catheter can be placed correctly in the vein.

A sandbag may be placed on top of the insertion area to put pressure on the site. This helps reduce any bleeding. This remains in place for at least an hour following the procedure.

**Where the HICKMAN® Catheter is placed:**

![Diagram of HICKMAN Catheter Insertion Site](image)

**This is the room in Radiology where your HICKMAN® catheter is inserted:**

![Radiology Image](image)

**After the Procedure**

You may have some bruising and discomfort around the insertion area. Pain relief can help. There may be some oozing of blood at the insertion site. The nursing staff will monitor this.

**The Care of Your HICKMAN® Catheter**

**Protecting your HICKMAN® catheter from getting an infection is important**

- Always wash your hands before touching your HICKMAN® catheter.
- Try not to get water directly onto the dressing. Always keep the catheter lumens above your waist line.
- Do not **bath** or **swim** while you have your HICKMAN® catheter in place.
- Avoid pulling on your catheter or doing activities that could damage or dislodge it.
- Ensure your HICKMAN® catheter is always well secured and protected.
- Never use scissors, pins or needles around your catheter.
- Make sure your HICKMAN® catheter is clamped at all times when not in use.
- Always keep your appointments for your catheter dressing.
- Let us know if you are unable to make appointments.

Your dressing may be changed 24 hours following the insertion. This is to check for any bleeding and to inspect the site. From then on, it is redressed weekly or if the dressing becomes loose or damaged. When your HICKMAN® catheter is redressed, the site and the surrounding area will be inspected by a nurse. The lumens are then secured so they do not hang below the waistline.

**The HICKMAN® Catheter Dressing and Securement:**

![Diagram of HICKMAN Catheter Dressing and Securement](image)
Removal of Stitches

☀ The stitches on your neck are removed 10 days following the insertion of your HICKMAN® catheter.
☀ The stitches at the exit site are removed three weeks after the insertion of your HICKMAN® catheter.

This allows time for the catheter cuff to ‘adhere’ to the tissues under the skin to hold the HICKMAN® catheter in place.

Going Home

When you are discharged from hospital, your HICKMAN® catheter will be redressed weekly, the positive displacement devices are changed and the catheter will be flushed. This may coincide with a visit to the hospital. This is important and is done to help prevent infection and to keep your HICKMAN® catheter working properly.

Your Responsibility

Each day, check your HICKMAN® catheter site for any problems such as pain, redness or leaking. If you feel unwell or a problem arises and you are concerned, contact your treatment centre immediately (refer to contact numbers on back page).

Report anything you feel is not right with your catheter.

Remember:
Always wash your hands before touching your HICKMAN® catheter.
### How to identify problems and what to do about them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Action / Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Catheter Site</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Pain or oozing</td>
<td>Could be infection</td>
<td>Your treatment centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Redness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>– Swelling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Feeling unwell</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Temperature, cough</td>
<td>Sign of infection</td>
<td>Your treatment centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Increased heart rate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Chills and shaking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Swelling</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Of the upper arm</td>
<td>Sign of clot in vein</td>
<td>Your treatment centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Pain in the neck and shoulder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Neck</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Hand mottled</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Catheter</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Abnormal feeling at insertion site</td>
<td>Catheter may have come out of position</td>
<td>Your treatment centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Cuff seen at insertion site</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Tingling and pain</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Catheter falls out</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hold breath and place fingers over the incision on your neck, press firmly 5-10 minutes with head turned towards that side. Contact your treatment centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Break or cut in catheter</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clamp or tie your catheter immediately between split and where your catheter comes out of your body. Contact your treatment centre,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Breathing problems</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>– Shortness of breath</td>
<td>May have clot in lung</td>
<td>GO IMMEDIATELY TO THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT OR YOUR COMMUNITY HOSPITAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Chest pain</td>
<td>Air may have entered the vein</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If your catheter doesn’t feel or look right, please contact your treatment centre.*

### IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

For advice or help, contact your treatment centre by calling one of the numbers below:

**Bone Marrow Transplant Unit**: (03) 364 0660

**Haematology Outpatients**: (03) 364 0384 (8.00am to 4.30pm)

**Oncology**: (03) 364 0020 and follow prompts for Ward 27 or Triage nurse

**Other departments**: Always keep this booklet with you and bring it to any emergency appointments.

### References:

- The Haematology Red Book Clinical Haematology, CDHB.CVAD 1.12,1.1.3
- [www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)
- Center for Disease Control & Prevention.(2011) Guidelines for the prevention of Intravascular Catheter Related Infection