

Caring for your child's cannula at home

This leaflet explains how to care for a cannula at home. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for your child.

What is a cannula and what is it used for?

A cannula is a thin, hollow flexible plastic tube that is inserted into a vein using a needle. The needle is removed and the plastic cannula is left in place. The cannula is taped in place with a clear dressing and is usually secured with a bandage. The cannula is used to give medicines into the vein (also known as intravenous).

Why does your child need a cannula?

The team looking after your child has decided that it is best for your child to receive medication intravenously (straight into the bloodstream through a vein). This is the most effective way for a medicine to be given. Depending on which medication your child needs, it will be given over a few minutes, or over a longer time by using a special pump.

How you care for the cannula

- The cannula must be kept clean and dry, avoid direct contact with water (avoid bathing).
- Always keep the cannula wrapped up in a bandage (you will be given spares).
- Avoid pulling or knocking the cannula, take care when changing clothes
- Contact us if you notice any problems with the cannula (see below).

What to do if the cannula comes out

- Apply pressure for 5 minutes with a piece of gauze.
- Raise your child's arm.
- Apply a plaster once the bleeding has stopped.
- Contact the team caring for your child during working hours (it is not an emergency).

How to tell if there is a problem with the cannula

Sometimes problems can happen with cannulas. They can irritate the vein or come out, get blocked or infected. Cannulas are used for short lengths of time. Even with the best care, sometimes they just stop working and a new one is needed. The team caring for your child will arrange a new cannula if needed.

If you notice any of these signs, or you have any concerns, please contact the team caring for your child. Signs of a problem with a cannula include:

- pain or stinging around the cannula
- redness around the cannula
- swelling around the cannula
- leaking of fluid or blood from the cannula site
- the cannula looking as if it has moved and is coming out
- the dressing becoming loose or wet.

Contact us

Evelina Children's Hospital @home team, **tel:** 020 7188 7188 and ask for the Children's Hospital @Home Team, Monday-Sunday, 8am-10pm

Children's Community Nursing Team, **tel:** 020 3049 7585, Monday-Sunday, 8am-6pm

Key practitioner involved in your child's care:

Name of practitioner

Contact details for practitioner

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit **web:** www.evelinalondon.nhs.uk/leaflets

Evelina London Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's medicines, please speak to the staff caring for them or contact our helpline.

tel: 020 7188 3003, Monday to Friday, 10am-5pm, **email:** letstalkmedicines@gstt.nhs.uk

Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline, **tel:** 020 7188 8748, Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm,

email: mymedicines@gstt.nhs.uk

Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), **tel:** 020 7188 8801, **email:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk. To make a complaint, contact the complaints department, **tel:** 020 7188 3514, **email:** complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk

Language and accessible support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch, **tel:** 020 7188 8815, **email:** languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk

NHS 111

This service offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day, **tel:** 111, **web:** www.111.nhs.uk

NHS website

This website gives information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you take control of your health and wellbeing, **web:** www.nhs.uk



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