

100k *lives* Campaign

SOME IS NOT A NUMBER. SOON IS NOT A TIME.

What You Need to Know about Central Line Infections (CLI): *A Fact Sheet for Patients and their Family Members*

Patients who need frequent intravenous (IV) medications, blood, fluid replacement and/or nutrition may have a central venous catheter (or “line”) placed into one of their veins. This line can stay in place for days and even weeks.

Catheter-related bloodstream infections (CR-BSI):

Lines are often very helpful. But sometimes they cause infections when bacteria grow in the line and spreads to the patient’s bloodstream. This is called a “catheter-related bloodstream infection” (CR-BSI). It is very serious and 20 percent (or 1 out of 5) of patients who get CR-BSI die from it.

A bundle of 5 care steps to prevent CR-BSI:

Doctors and nurses can help prevent CR-BSI by using a bundle of 5 “care steps.” Hospitals find that when all 5 of these steps are done that there are almost no cases of CR-BSI. The bundle of care steps are:

- Using proper hand hygiene. Everyone who touches the central line must wash their hands with soap and water or an alcohol cleanser.
- Wearing maximal barrier precautions. The person who inserts the line should be in sterile clothing – wearing a mask, gloves, and hair covering. The patient should be fully covered with a sterile drape, except for a very small hole where the line goes in.
- Cleaning the patient’s skin with “chlorhexidine” (a type of soap) when the line is put in.
- Finding the best vein to insert the line. Often, this is the subclavian vein (in the chest) which is not as likely to get an infection as veins in the arm or leg.
- Checking the line for infection each day. The line should be taken out only when needed and not on a schedule.

How patients and family members can help:

- Watch the hospital staff to make sure they wash their hands before and after working with the patient. Do not be afraid to remind them to wash their hands!
- Ask the doctors and nurses lots of questions before you agree to a line. Questions can include: Which vein will you use to put in the line? How will you clean the skin when the line goes in? What steps are you taking to lower the risk of infection?



- Make sure the doctors and nurses check the line every day for signs of infection. They should only replace the line when needed and not on a schedule.

Learn more about central line infections as they relate to the 100,000 Lives Campaign at www.ihl.org.

The 100,000 Lives Campaign is a national initiative of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement to engage more than 2,600 U.S. hospitals in a commitment to implement changes in care that have been proven to prevent avoidable deaths. The goal of the Campaign is to save 100,000 lives by June 2006.

<http://www.ihl.org/IHI/Programs/Campaign/Campaign.htm>

Information provided in this Fact Sheet is intended to help patients and their families in obtaining effective treatment and assisting medical professionals in the delivery of care. The IHI does not provide medical advice or medical services of any kind, however, and does not practice medicine or assist in the diagnosis, treatment, care, or prognosis of any patient. Because of rapid changes in medicine and information, the information in this Fact Sheet is not necessarily comprehensive or definitive, and all persons intending to rely on the information contained in this Fact Sheet are urged to discuss such information with their health care provider. Use of this information is at the reader's own risk.

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