

# Central Venous Line: Caring for the exit site and dressing change



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## Why take care of the exit site?

Germs can get into the exit site and cause infection. Always keep the area very clean and covered.

## How often should I clean the exit site and do a dressing change?

Change the dressing **once a week**. Change the dressing sooner if:

- The dressing gets dirty or loose, or
- The loop uncoils.

Every time you change the dressing, you need to change the StatLock if applicable (MedComp or PICC), and you should clean the exit site, the catheter, and the surrounding skin. Choose a time when you will not need to hurry.

## How do I clean the exit site and do a dressing change?

### Part 1: Set up your tray

1. Gather these supplies:

- 1 semi-permeable transparent dressing, like Tegaderm or IV 3000
- StatLock (if needed)
- Bottle 70% isopropyl alcohol
- Paper towels
- 4 Chlorhexidine/alcohol swabs
- 2 swab sticks, either
  - Red swab sticks: Chlorhexidine and alcohol, OR

- Green swab sticks: Chlorhexidine only (for sensitive skin)

- Cavilon no sting barrier (if needed)
- Adhesive remover (if needed)
- Waterproof tape (if needed)

3. Find a **non-porous surface** to work on. You can use a stainless steel cookie sheet, hard smooth plastic, or a glass tray. Ask your nurse if you are unsure what to use.

4. Clean your non-porous surface with alcohol and paper towels. Let it air dry.

5. Remove all rings and your watch:

- Wash your hands with soap and water for 1 minute.
- Rinse well.
- Dry hands with paper towel or a clean towel.
- Use the paper towel or towel to turn off the water tap.

6. Peel open the clear dressing package. Lay the package on the tray like an open book. The dressing package will become your sterile surface.



Half of the open package will be your dry side. Keep all dry supplies on this side of the package. The other half will be for wet supplies. Touching only the corners of the swabs, open the chlorhexidine/alcohol swabs. Put the swabs beside each other on the wet side.

Open the package of swab sticks. Put the swab side of the sticks on the wet side.

Open the cavilon barrier and adhesive remover if you need them. Put them on your tray.

Wash your hands again, or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer after setting up your tray. You must clean your hands before touching your child's line.

## Part 2: Clean the exit site

1. **Remove the old dressing.** First, unpin your child's line from their shirt. Then, gently remove the dressing. Start at the edges and work your way to the exit site. If any strips criss-cross over the catheter, remove those first. You can use adhesive remover to help.



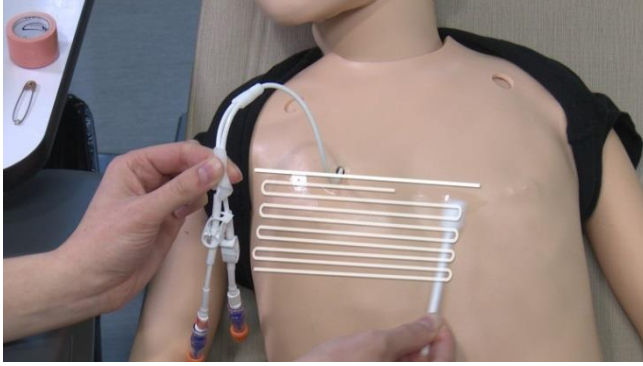
2. **Check for infection at the exit site.** Look for redness, swelling, crusting or leaking around the catheter. If you see any of these, finish the dressing change. Then, call your nurse clinician or doctor.



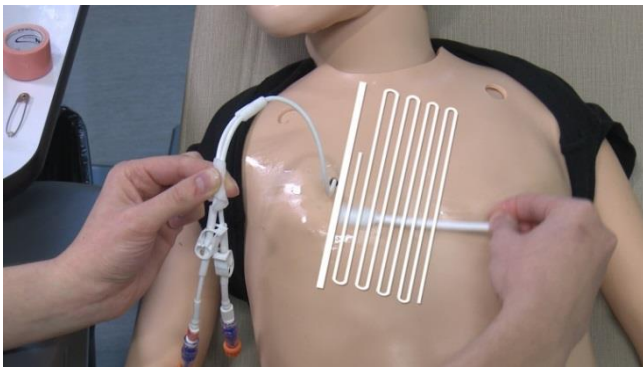
3. **Clean the catheter.** Pick up the catheter at the V-site with an alcohol swab. With your other hand, unfold a second alcohol swab and wrap around the catheter at the exit site. Clean the catheter from the exit site to the cap. Apply gentle pressure and use friction to clean the line. Do not pull on the catheter. Remember to always start at the exit site and work away, **do not go back and forth** with the same swab. Discard the swab.

Repeat with a new alcohol swab. Let the line dry for one minute. You can start the next step while the line dries. Remember to keep holding the line off of your child's skin.

4. Hold your child's line off their skin while you **clean the exit site.** Start at the exit site with a swab stick. Move the swab stick from side to side. Clean one half of the skin area this way. This will take at least 15 seconds. Flip the swab over. Clean the other half of the skin area, moving the swab stick from side to side. Do this for at least 15 seconds.



With the second swab stick, repeat these steps. This time, move the swab up and down. Clean half the skin area for at least 15 seconds. Then, flip the swab stick over, and clean the other half of the skin area. Again, clean for at least 15 seconds.



5. **Let the skin dry.** Keep holding the line off of your child's skin.

- If you used **red swabs sticks**, let the skin dry for at least one minute.
- **If you used green swab sticks** (chlorhexidine only), let the skin dry for at least 3 minutes.

Do not blow on the site or fan air to speed up the drying time.

### Part 3: Apply the dressing

1. **If your child needs Cavilon skin prep**, put it on after the skin dries. Do not put

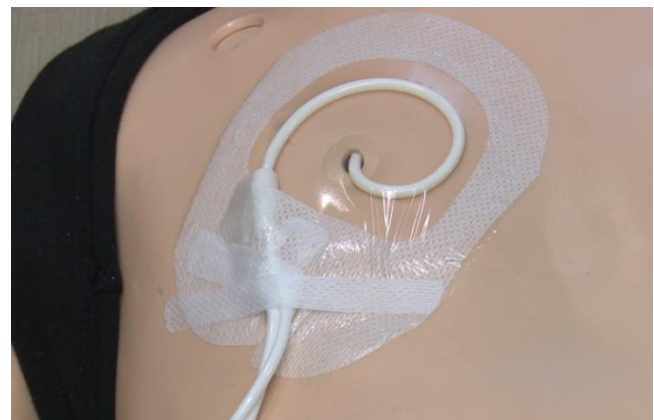
Cavilon in the 2 centimeters around the exit site. Let Cavilon dry for 30 seconds.

2. When your child's skin is dry, apply the dressing. Do not put the dressing on wet skin. This can cause a rash.

To apply the dressing, hold the V site of the catheter. Make a loop in the line to coil the catheter. Make sure that the cleaned area stays clean. **If your child has a MedComp or Powerline, do NOT make a loop. You may need a StatLock. Your nurse will show you how to apply this.**

Do not stretch the dressing. Peel off the backing. Put the dressing on top of the coil. You should see the CVL exit site through the clear window of the dressing. Smooth the dressing over the exit site and catheter. Make sure it seals firmly.

You can use the pink or white strips included in the dressing package to help keep the catheter in place. Criss-cross one strip around the catheter at the bottom of the dressing to help hold the line in place. Place the second strip on top of the criss-cross to anchor the line.



3. Re-pin your child's line to their shirt.

- Stick a tab of waterproof tape to your child's lumen(s). The tab should be between the dressing and the cap. Pin through the tape carefully to attach the end of the catheter to the undershirt. **Do not** put the pin through the lumen.



## Contacts

**Community Nurse:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Doctor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Nurse Clinician / Hospital Nurse:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

At Children's & Women's Health Centre of British Columbia we believe parents are partners on the health care team. We want you to be as informed as possible.

This pamphlet will answer some of your questions. Please ask questions and share your concerns.

Have questions at home? Please call the contacts above.