

Central Line Care FAQ

What Is a central line associated blood stream Infection?

An infection that occurs when bacteria or other germs travel down a “central line” and enter the blood. If you develop a catheter-associated bloodstream infection, you may become very sick.

Can a central line associated bloodstream infection be treated?

Though serious, a catheter-associated bloodstream infection can usually be treated successfully with antibiotics.

Here are some things that Roswell clinicians do to prevent these infections. Your clinician should:

- promote and give you chlorhexidine bathing wipes to use every day to disinfect and remove bacteria from the skin.
- clean their hands, wear gloves, and clean the catheter cap before using the catheter to draw blood or give medications.
- carefully handle IV medications and fluids that are given through the catheter cap.
- place a protective green alcohol cover on the end of every unused lumen.
- change the central line dressing and IV tubing on a regular basis, following hospital protocol.
- clean their hands, and wear sterile gloves and a mask when changing the central line dressing.
- check every day to see if you still need the catheter. The catheter will be removed as soon as it is no longer needed.

What can you do to help prevent a central line associated bloodstream infection?

- Ask your doctors and nurses to explain why you need the catheter and how long you will have it.
- Make sure that all doctors and nurses caring for you clean either clean their hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub before and after caring for you.
- Make sure that all nurses caring for you clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub and put on gloves before handling your central line or IV tubing.
- If you do not see your providers clean their hands, please ask them to do so.
- If the central line dressing becomes loose, wet, dirty, or falls off, tell your nurse immediately.
- Tell your nurse if the area around your catheter is sore or red.
- Make sure family and friends clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub before visiting you.
- Do not let family and friends who visit touch the catheter or the tubing without proper training.

Central line infections are very serious. They can make you sick and increase the length of your hospital stay. Your central line needs special care as evidenced by the information above to prevent infection. Your healthcare team is asking that you partner with us to combat this complication. If you have any additional questions, please ask your doctor or nurse. We're here for you!