

Your Child's Tunnelled Uncuffed Central Venous Catheter at Starship



Tunnelled Uncuffed
CVC

What is a Tunnelled Uncuffed central venous catheter (CVC)?

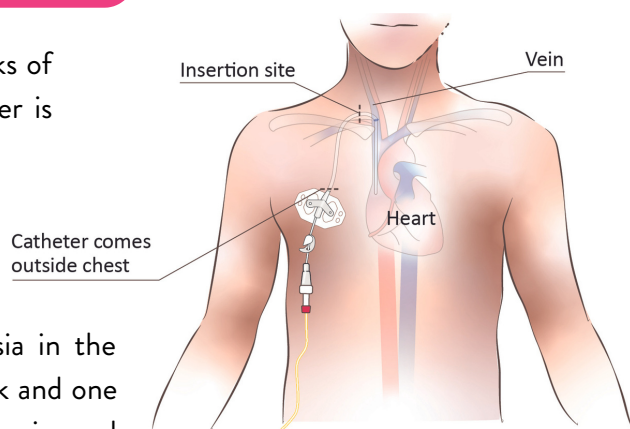
A tunnelled uncuffed central venous catheter is a type of central venous access device that allows easy access to your child's bloodstream. The catheter is a thin and flexible tube that is placed into a vein in the neck and gently moved into the right side of the heart; the outside part of the catheter sits on the upper chest wall.

Why might my child need a Tunnelled Uncuffed CVC?

A tunnelled uncuffed CVC is useful for smaller babies when weeks of IV treatment is needed. It can stay in for months if the catheter is working well.

How is a Tunnelled Uncuffed CVC inserted?

A tunnelled uncuffed CVC is inserted under general anaesthesia in the operating room. There are two small cuts made – one on the neck and one on the chest. Once the tunnelled uncuffed CVC is inserted, x-ray is used to make sure the catheter is in the right place. The catheter on the outside of the body is secured in place with a special device and is covered with a see-through dressing.



Care and Maintenance

- The catheter should always be kept dry. If your child has a bath, the water level should be below the tunnelled uncuffed CVC
- Take care when dressing your child to make sure the catheter is not pulled
- When the tunnelled uncuffed CVC is not being used it will be 'hep-locked'. Hep-locking is when a medicine called heparinised saline is placed in the catheter to prevent blood from clotting in the catheter
- Every 7 days the nurse will check your tunnelled uncuffed CVC to make sure it is working well and place new heparinised saline in the catheter
- The needle free connector is changed every 4 days when in use and every 7 days if the catheter has not been used
- The dressing is changed every 7 days. This involves carefully taking off the old dressing, cleaning the exit site and putting on a new dressing

If you need to give your child medications through the uncuffed tunnelled CVC at home, you will be provided with the education and information to do so

When and how is a Tunnelled Uncuffed CVC removed?

A tunnelled uncuffed CVC can stay in for weeks to months and is removed at the end of treatment or when it is no longer needed. In most cases, removal is a simple procedure and will be done by your nurse. A dressing will be applied for 1-2 days until the skin is healed.

Potential Complications

- Blockage in the tunnelled uncuffed CVC – this may be fixed with anti-clotting medication. If the catheter remains blocked, it may need to be removed
- Infection – monitor your child's temperature and check the exit site for signs of swelling, redness or pain

If the catheter is pulled out:

Apply pressure immediately to the insertion site and contact your homecare nurse, local hospital or ward straight away.

If the catheter breaks:

Immediately clamp the catheter between the break and the body with the clamp from your safety pack. If you are unable to clamp it, fold the catheter on itself and tape the fold together to work as the clamp. Contact your homecare nurse, local hospital or ward straight away.

If the dressing starts to lift or come off:

Cover it with a dressing from the safety pack and contact your homecare nurse for a dressing change. The safety pack should include sterile gauze, a clamp, a dressing and any additional supplies specific to your child's care.

Please take your child's temperature each day

If your child's temperature is above 38°C, please notify the Homecare Nurse, Nurse Specialist, the ward or Starship Children's Emergency Department. Oncology patients to inform ward 27A/B or contact local shared care centre immediately.



Questions and Additional Notes

Contact Number (s)