Care After Your Groshong Catheter

What is it?
A Groshong catheter can be used for easy access to your vein over a long period of time.
• Your doctor will explain the procedure before starting.
• You may receive some relaxing medicine during the procedure.
• Your doctor will give you some local anesthetic to numb your skin.
• The catheter is placed in a large blood vessel close to your heart and then tunneled under the skin leaving the end of the catheter outside your body.

Catheter cap care
• Change the cap using sterile technique any time that it looks dirty or if it is removed for any reason.
• You do not need to clamp the tube when changing the cap.
• To change the cap:
  – Wash your hands with soap and water.
  – Open the new cap package.
  – Clean the cap/catheter connection with an alcohol wipe and allow it to dry.
  – Hold the catheter below the level of your heart (to prevent air from entering the catheter) and unscrew the old cap.
  – Screw in the new cap keeping the end of the catheter and the cap sterile.
• The manufacturer’s company (BARD) suggests changing the cap every 7 days or after it is used 18 times.
• You may use a positive pressure end cap.

Aspirating or flushing catheter
• Check the placement of the catheter before any use.
  – Use a 10cc syringe filled with sterile normal saline and draw back until you see blood in the syringe. Once you see blood, you can flush the catheter with the contents of the syringe.
  – To aspirate blood, slowly pull back the syringe, pausing after 2 seconds to allow the internal valve to open and blood to come into the catheter.
  – Use a 10 cc syringe of sterile normal saline to flush the catheter after each use (blood draw or IV fluids/medicine) or at least every 7 days if it is not being used.
  – Do not flush the catheter with heparin.

Dressing and site care
Keep the incision dry and a dressing in place until the stitches are removed.
• The stitches and wing are usually removed in 14 to 28 days.
• Change the dressing every 3 days for the first 14 to 28 days until the stitches are removed.
• After the stitches are removed, you do not need a dressing. You can secure the catheter in place with tape.
• Avoid tub baths, hot tubs and swimming, even after the stitches are removed.
• Do not pull or tug on the catheter.

Cleaning
Clean the outside of the catheter and end cap using an alcohol wipe.

Continued
Call your doctor if you have:
• Temperature over 101° F
• Signs of infection, such as redness, drainage or swelling around the site
• Chest pain
• Trouble breathing
• Difficulty flushing the catheter
• Swelling of the face, arm, neck or chest

If any damage (cut, hole or crack) happens to the catheter, clamp the catheter right away with a soft clamp. The clamp needs to be put on close to the chest (between the chest and hole) to prevent air from entering the catheter.
• If you do not have a clamp, bend (kink) the catheter and tape it together to prevent air from entering the catheter.
• Call your doctor right away.
• Carry a soft clamp or tape with you at all times.

If the Groshong catheter is accidently pulled out, immediately put a gauze dressing over the incision site and apply pressure.
• Call your doctor immediately.