



## WHAT IS A CANNULA?

A cannula is a small plastic tube that is inserted into a vein for the purpose of giving medication to your child, as decided by your child's doctor.

It is also called a 'Freddie', a 'Line' or a 'Drip'.

A cannula is kept in place with steristrips and a clear breathable dressing. A clamped extension set is then placed on the cannula to allow for easy access to give your child's medication. It is important that the clamp is closed at all times when the cannula is not in use. To secure your child's cannula, tape will be applied.

## WHY IS MY CHILD GOING HOME WITH A CANNULA?

Your child's doctor has decided that he / she is well enough to be discharged with their cannula left in place to complete their treatment. We are asking that you will keep a close eye on your child's cannula when they are at home and to phone the hospital if you have any concerns at all.

Staff will check the cannula prior to discharge.



## ARE THERE ANY RISKS?

A cannula is a tube that is in direct contact with the bloodstream. There is a risk for infection. Strict handwashing and hygiene is essential to minimise this risk.

A cannula is a tube that may dislodge (or fall out) which can cause pain, infection or bleeding if the correct actions are not taken.

## CARE OF THE CANNULA

It is important that your child's cannula is cared for whilst at home. The nursing staff in the hospital will discuss care of the cannula and answers any questions you may have.

## WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

Keep a close eye on your child that they are not 'playing' with their cannula. A good solution to this is to keep it **COVERED** with a bandage or glove/mitten. This prevents accidental dislodgement of the cannula and also keeps it clean. Do not excessively cover it, as this will make the skin sweat and may loosen the inner bandages.

**CHECK** the cannula at least every 4-6 hours to confirm that the dressing is secure and that there are no leakages / bleeding.

Keep the outer dressings **CLEAN**: This helps prevent infection from getting into the line. If you do need to touch the area, make sure to wash and dry your hands thoroughly before and after inspection.

Keep the outer dressings **DRY**: This prevents the dressings from getting loose which may cause accidental dislodgement of the cannula. If you do notice that the dressing is wet, secure with tape and contact hospital.

**TAKE CARE** when dressing / undressing your child's clothing so that the cannula does not dislodge.

**NEVER** attempt to give anything through your child's cannula, **unless you have been specifically trained by your Clinical Nurse Specialist.**

## CAN I SHOWER / BATHE MY CHILD?

Yes. However, it is important that you cover the cannula to keep it dry and clean. Covering it with a plastic bag and sealing it with tape is a good method to ensure this. Do not directly submerge in water.

## WHAT SHOULD I LOOK OUT FOR?

### **IMMEDIATE ACTION REQUIRED IF:**

**ANY** changes in skin:

- Red
- Hot
- Painful
- Swollen
- White
- Hard
- Noticeable Red Line Above Cannula Site
- Size Difference In Opposite Limb

Child becomes unwell / develops a fever.

**Action:** Contact hospital to seek further instruction.