

# Caring for your PD Catheter

## SHORT TERM

For the first 7 to 10 days after having your PD catheter placed, you will need to leave the bandage in place. Do not change it. If the bandage must be changed, it needs to be done by a trained PD nurse in a sterile environment to prevent infection.

Complications of peritoneal dialysis can include infection, but the risk is lower than a central venous catheter (CVC).<sup>i</sup> Potential infection can occur:

- *In the actual lining of your abdomen*
- *In the tunnel that the catheter passes through*
- *At the site where the catheter exits your body*

You'll need to take additional precautions until your access is completely healed, including:

- *Keep your access site area dry - no showering, baths or swimming*
- *Do not attempt any heavy lifting or strenuous exercise*
- *If you are constipated, talk to your doctor - straining to have a bowel movement can lead to problems with your catheter<sup>ii</sup>*

## LONG TERM

For as long as you have a PD catheter, you'll need to follow a care program. Your long-term care program includes:

- *Frequent hand washing*
- *Cleaning your access site as determined by your PD nurse*
- *Keeping your access site dry*
- *Not picking at scabs or the skin around your access site*
- *Using sterile technique whenever removing the protective end-cap from your catheter to instill or drain the dialysate solution*
- *If prescribed, applying antibiotic ointment when changing your dressing*



## ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF A PD CATHETER

Advantages:

- *Needles are not used, unlike with AV fistulas and AV grafts*
- *Dialysis is performed at home without needing any bulky equipment*
- *There are fewer restrictions on diet and fluid intake compared to those having hemodialysis*
- *A temporary central venous catheter (CVC) is not needed with urgent start PD<sup>iii</sup>*

Disadvantages:

- *For as long as you have a PD catheter, you may not be able to take a bath or go swimming*
- *You're at risk of developing peritonitis, an infection of the membrane that lines your abdomen*

Visit [infodialysisaccess.com](http://infodialysisaccess.com) for the latest educational information for dialysis access management.

### Sources:

<sup>i</sup>Akoh, J. A. (2012) Peritoneal dialysis associated infections: An update on diagnosis and management. World Journal of Nephrology 1(4): 106-122.

<sup>ii</sup>Burkart, J. M. (2016) Patient Information: Peritoneal dialysis (Beyond the Basics). Waltham, MA: UpToDate.

<sup>iii</sup>Ghaffari, A. (2016) Urgent-start peritoneal dialysis. Waltham, MA: UpToDate. Accessed from: <http://www.uptodate.com/contents/urgent-start-peritoneal-dialysis>

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