

Bleeding Arterio-Venous Fistula or Graft

Information for patients and parents



DAY MEDICAL UNIT

Be aware

While it is rare for a fistula or graft to bleed after treatment, it can happen and lead to rupture.

It is important to be alert to the warning signs below and respond appropriately.

Warning signs

You have a higher risk of excess bleeding if your fistula or graft:

- Is not healing
- Is infected
- Is bulging and noticeable increasing in size
- Has very thin or shiny skin

OR if you have:

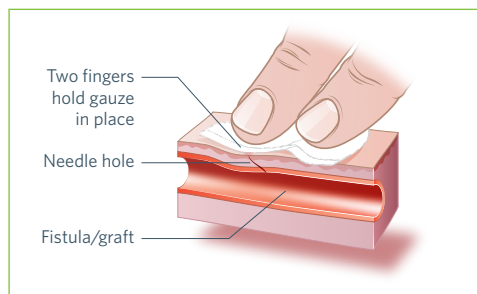
- High venous pressure during treatment
- Longer clotting time (increased International Normalised Ratio—INR)

When you notice any of these signs, you need to notify your dialysis unit or apheresis staff, and on weekends, contact the treating team as directed in the contact details section of this fact sheet.

Holding off

As you have been shown after your/your child's procedure at the hospital:

- Use 2 fingers to hold the gauze
- Apply firm, continuous pressure



- Wait at least 10 minutes before checking to see if bleeding has stopped
- When bleeding stops, apply fresh gauze and tape again and GET HELP

Remember

- Report all instances of bleeding at home from the AVF to staff at the hospital
- If in doubt, ring **000** and get help immediately

Be prepared

Emergency kit

You should have an emergency kit available, containing:

- 4 packets of gauze swabs
- 1 roll of adhesive tape (Micropore)

Action plan

You need to be ready in the event that your fistula or graft starts to bleed after you have left dialysis or apheresis. There are some simple things you can do:

- Stay calm
- Ask for help from anyone nearby
- You should be able to control the bleeding by applying pressure on the spot using gauze from your emergency kit or any other small clean material
- Hold the spot for at least 10 minutes and call **000** for help

Recognise the warning signs and know how to react

Daily check

- Feel for thrill or buzz
- Listen for bruit or whooshing sound
- Tenderness
- Hotter than the surrounding skin

Look for

- Changes in skin colour
- Swelling
- Bleeding or weeping
- Any other change in appearance



Contact details

Bleeding

- Telephone The Royal Children's Hospital **03 9345 5522** and ask to speak to the covering Plastic/Vascular Surgical Consultant

Changes in daily check

- Telephone The Royal Children's Hospital **03 9345 5522** and ask to speak to the on call consultant for your/your child's condition — e.g., Nephrologist, Haematologist

Nephrology

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