

Useful Telephone Numbers

Community Children's Nursing Team ☎ 01438 288370

Bluebell Ward, Lister Hospital ☎ 01438 284008

We're here to help

We have Community Children's Nurses covering East and North Hertfordshire. The team work closely with primary care and other agencies to help achieve the highest quality of care for families. We are available for support and advice Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

The service offers care and support for children who need nursing care within their home and other community settings. These include children with:

- Chronic, special needs and palliative care needs
- Cancer
- Blood disorders
- Enteral feeding
- Respiratory and cardiac conditions
- Rheumatology conditions, such as arthritis
- Acute conditions that require follow-up, such as infections which need long-term treatment

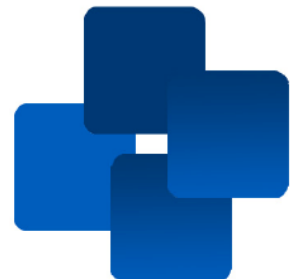
We aim to:

- Provide high quality, specialist nursing care
- Shorten hospital stay and prevent readmission
- Help the child and family to meet their own care needs

Parent Information

Child or Young Person with a Hickman Line

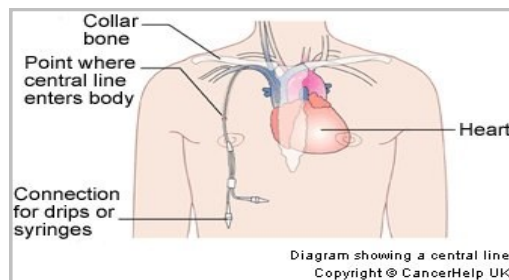
Community Children's Nursing Team



What is a Hickman line?

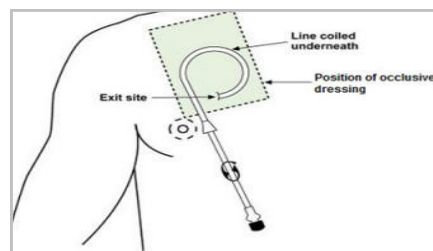
A Hickman line is a central venous access device which enables blood samples to be taken and drugs to be given easily to children undergoing treatment for a variety of conditions. It is a catheter which is inserted into a large vein and the tip sits in either the superior vena cava or the tip of the right atrium of the heart.

The line usually comes out of the body in the chest area and may have either a single lumen or a double lumen (one or two ends). Each lumen is sealed with a special cap or bung. These screw onto the end of each lumen. There may be a clamp on each lumen to keep it closed when it's not being used.



Dressings

Where the Hickman line comes out of the body, there will be a clear dressing covering it to help keep it secure and prevent it from becoming infected. The line will be looped with the dressing over the top. The dressing must remain in place to keep the area safe and clean.



The community children's nurses (CCN) visit children and young people with Hickman lines on a weekly basis to flush the line and change the dressings. We can teach you how to do this and show you what to do if the dressing starts to come off.

Very important things to remember

Children with a Hickman line must NOT do the following:

- Swimming or water sports.
- Contact sports, such as rugby/football as the line may get accidentally pulled.
- Never let anyone touch or play with the line.
- Never use scissors near the line.

Troubleshooting - What to do if ...

All items will be found in the Child's Line Safety Pack.

Stay calm and reassure the child/young person.

- **Line is unclamped** - Simply close clamp and advise parents or our CCN team to ensure the line is flushed within a short period of time.
- **Dressing comes off or is wet** - If the dressing comes loose or gets wet, wash your hands and loop the line, then apply a new dressing. Advise family that you have replaced dressing.
- **Bungs** - If a bung works its way loose or falls off, wash your hands well, clean the end of the catheter with a medical cleansing wipe and put on a new cap without touching the end of the line or the screw end of the new bung. Inform parents or CCN team, or local children's ward if out of hours.
- **Leaks in the line** - Should there be an obvious break in the line, move a clamp to above the leak and close it. If no clamp, cover the leak with sterile gauze and, using the blue clamps in the safety pack, clamp the line between the chest and the break using the section of the blue clamp at the bottom of the "V".

If no clamps are available, bend the line over, cover with gauze then wrap a piece of the clear dressing around the break to secure it. The line will need repairing at the child's specialist hospital as soon as possible.

- **Line falls out** - In the unlikely event of the line coming out, apply pressure with sterile gauze over the exit site and also the neck vein on the side of the line. Apply pressure for 5 minutes; it will probably not bleed a lot. Contact parents - if they're not available, arrange transfer to hospital.
- **Skin under dressing looks sore** - if the skin is itchy or looks red, oozing or bleeding, please call the CCN team or your local children's ward for advice. Seek doctor review if the child/young person has a temperature and is unwell.