

Hickman Line Insertion - Information for patients

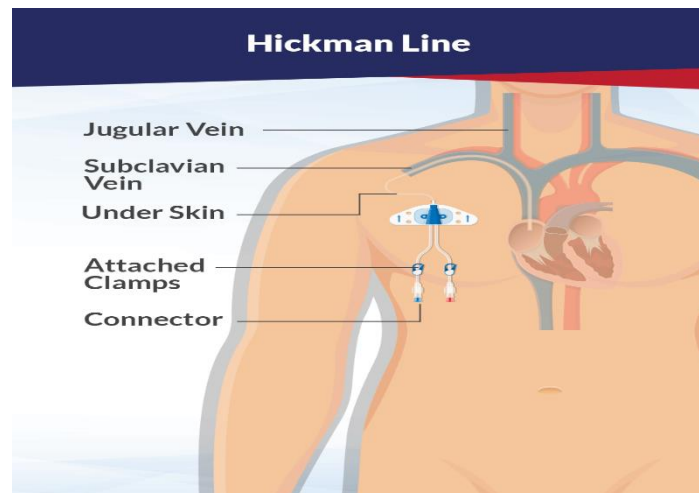
This leaflet aims to answer some of the questions you may have about having a Hickman Line insertion. It explains the risks and the benefits of the procedure and what you can expect when you come to hospital.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to the staff caring for you.

What are Hickman lines?

A Hickman line is a long, flexible plastic tube that is tunneled underneath the skin of the chest wall and into the large vein draining into the heart. It is used to give medications directly into the bloodstream (intravenous - IV). Part of the line remains outside of the skin for administration of these, and multiple medications can be given depending on how many lumens (space in the middle of the tube) the line has.

They are usually recommended for patients who are having regular chemotherapy, long-term antibiotics, total parenteral nutrition (TPN) or difficult venous access. This is because they can remain in place long-term and can be used for IV medications, nutrients or blood samples throughout a course of treatment. They can be used immediately and require no general anaesthetic.



What are the benefits of having a Hickman Line?

There are many benefits of a Hickman line:

- It prevents the need for daily punctures of your skin to obtain the blood tests required during your treatment, as the blood can be taken daily from your Hickman Line.
- It provides permanent access to allow administration of chemotherapy, blood products and intravenous fluids or antibiotics that you might need during the course of your treatment.
- It prevents the need for continual insertion of cannulas (tubes) for this purpose

What are the risks of having a Hickman Line?

A Hickman line insertion is a very safe procedure, but as with any medical procedure there are some risks and complications that can occur. The radiologist will explain these to you before the procedure. Below is a list of some possible risks:

- Pain/bruising at puncture site (usually settles within 24 hours. Pain relief can be taken e.g. paracetamol)
- Kinks in the line – usually just needs re-positioned
- Infection – the risk is low and can generally be treated satisfactorily with antibiotics, but occasionally the line may need removed
- Blockage of line – if a blood clot is blocking the line, medication can be given through it to unblock it. Blood thinning medication may be required if you have a blood clot in the vein
- Scarring – the procedure requires two small cuts in the skin. These will heal as small scars

Contrast

Hickman line insertion may use x-ray dye (contrast), and very rarely, a reaction may occur. If you have ever had a test that uses x-ray dye and you have had a reaction to it, you should tell the doctor or nurse before you have your Hickman line insertion. A reaction may take the form of a rash or itching and very rarely, a more severe allergic reaction can occur. The team are training to deal with this and have measures in place to deal with this safely should this occur.

If you have had a previous reaction, please let us know, and we can put measures in place to minimise risk from another reaction.

Radiation – Benefit versus Risk

Hickman line insertions use X-ray radiation. The radiation dose that you get from a Hickman Line insertion is small and the associated risks are low. Clinical staff consider both the risks and benefits when deciding what examination is appropriate for you. The benefits of having the Hickman Line insertion outweigh any risk. Clinical staff are responsible for making sure that the dose you receive is kept as low as necessary to aid your diagnosis or treatment.

Pregnancy

If you are in the early stages of pregnancy there is a very small risk of x-rays harming your unborn child. If you think you could be pregnant, or you are trying to get pregnant, please tell us before your appointment. Individuals aged 10-55 will be asked to confirm their pregnancy status by the radiographer before the procedure and asked to sign a form.

Are there any alternatives?

Your referrer has decided that dialysis line insertion would be the most useful in your case. The examination will help your referrer to assess you more fully and plan any further treatment that might be necessary. If you would like more information about alternative imaging tests, please speak to the doctor or health care professional managing your care.

File name: PIL - Hickman Line Insertion	Page 2 of 7	Version 2.0	Date of Issue: 29 th January 2024 Date of Review: January 2026
UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED AND NOT VIEWED ON SHAREPOINT			

Consent

We want you to be involved in all the decisions about your care and treatment. The Interventional Radiologist will ask you if you are happy for the procedure to go ahead. This is called verbal consent. If you do not wish to have the procedure or are undecided, please tell the Radiologist. Students/trainees may be present during the examination but only with your verbal consent.

Please remember that you can ask the Interventional Radiologist any questions you have at any time before, during or after your scan.

Pre-assessment

Pre-assessment is not required.

Fasting

You may be asked not to eat or drink anything for 4 hours before the procedure.

What happens before the procedure?

You will receive a letter detailing your admission details, and when you receive your letter, please let us know if you have any of the following:

• Severe allergies?
• Have you had a previous adverse reaction to x-ray dye before?
• Asthma, which is poorly controlled?
• Renal impairment (poor kidney function)?
• Diabetes, which is treated with Metformin therapy?
• Are taking any anti-coagulants (blood thinners)?

You will be asked to change into a hospital gown and a small cannula (thin tube) will be inserted in your arm. You will be brought to the Interventional suite in your bed, where you will be met by a team of nurses, a Radiographer and an Interventional Radiologist (doctor). The procedure will be explained to you by the Radiologist and you will be asked to sign a consent form. The Royal Victoria Hospital is a teaching hospital and as such university students may be in attendance, with your permission.

What happens during the procedure?

You will be helped to transfer onto the X-ray table and monitors attached to record heart rate and blood pressure. You will be awake for the procedure.

The skin will be cleaned with antiseptic, sterile drapes will be placed over you, and the line insertion site is numbed with local anaesthetic (this will sting for a short while). A light sedative can also be given if needed (you will need accompanied home if you get this). Using ultrasound guidance a small needle will be placed accurately into the vein (neck). Once in position, a guidewire is placed through the needle to allow the line to be guided into position.

The line is 'tunnelled' under the skin from the upper chest wall and the tip is guided into position using live x-rays (fluoroscopy). When the interventional radiologist is inserting the line tip, you will be asked to hold your breath to avoid air getting in and causing discomfort. Once the line position is confirmed it is held in place with a stitch and cuff, and covered with a dressing.

As you are numbed with local anaesthetic, you should not feel any pain. You may feel some pushing/pulling sensations while the line is being tunnelled.

What happens after the procedure?

Once the procedure is completed, you will return to the Day of Surgery Unit/ ward for nursing staff to monitor you post procedure. You can usually eat and drink normally, unless told not to. You will generally go home later that day. Always be careful to avoid dislodging the line.

Aftercare following discharge

An adult must stay with you during the 24 hour period following discharge in the unlikely event of complications. Please have this arranged in advance.

You cannot drive yourself home or use public transport, again, please arrange this advance of your appointment. If you do not have anyone to drive you home, the Trust can help.

Please rest at home for 24 hours.

Do not exercise, lift heavy items or consume any alcohol during this period.

What to do when you get home

Taking care of your Hickman line:

- Use a waterproof dressing when showering to keep it dry. Do not submerge in water (bath or swimming) to avoid infection
- Get each lumen flushed once a week to avoid blockage (this can be arranged with the day unit where your treatment is or with a district nurse if not attending hospital)
- Inform a nurse or doctor immediately if you experience a cold/shivery attack during or after flushing of the line as it could be a sign of serious infection that needs treated immediately
- Inform your doctor/nurse if the line gets damaged, you develop any redness on the surrounding skin or you notice your line becomes loose at the skin

Results

You may be able to discuss your procedure with the performing Interventional Radiologist once it is complete. The performing Interventional Radiologist will formally report on your procedure, and it will be attached to the images on our Radiology Information System (RIS). A copy of the report will be sent by Radiology to the referring clinician. Any follow up will be arranged by the referring clinician.

Image sharing

Your images will be electronically stored on the hospital picture archiving system. This data can be accessed throughout the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and other doctors and health care professionals who are directly involved in your care. The ability to share images and radiological reports will improve the safety and quality of your care by ensuring that the right information is available in the right place at the right time.

In order to improve the medical services we provide we may also use your data as anonymously as possible for internal audit and medical education. If you would prefer that your data is not used for these purposes, please inform a member of staff when you attend for your examination.

If your data is to be used for research, then a separate consent process will be used. You will be asked for your consent, should this be the case.

Contact us

If you have any queries, we will be happy to answer any questions before or after your procedure and you can contact us on the number given on your appointment letter.

For procedures performed at the Royal Victoria Hospital, please email InterventionRadRVH@belfasttrust.hscni.net Tel: 02896156661 Interventional Radiology Secretary RVH

For procedures at the Belfast City Hospital, please email InterventionRadBCH@belfasttrust.hscni.net Tel: 02895041165 Interventional Radiology Secretary BCH

Feedback

We hope you found the information in this leaflet helpful. If it did not tell you what you needed to know or you would like to provide any feedback on your experience please let us know so that we can make any necessary improvements.

You can provide feedback on your experience:

Telephone: (028) 9504 8000 (Monday-Friday: 9am-4pm)

Textphone: 18001 028 950 48000

By email: compliments@belfasttrust.hscni.net

By email: complaints@belfasttrust.hscni.net

By completing an online form: <http://www.belfasttrust.hscni.net/contact/FeedbackForm.htm>

Care Opinion



We invite you to share your experience by clicking the following link:
<https://www.careopinion.org.uk/>

or by scanning the following QR code on your smartphone or tablet:



Language and accessible support services

Deaf/Hard of Hearing

If a Sign Language interpreter is required, please either telephone **028 9615 8900** via the Sign Video remote interpreting service (<https://signvideo.co.uk/deaf-community/>) or email us at MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net and we will arrange one for your appointment. Please have your H&C number ready when calling or include it in your email. This can be found at the top right corner of any Health and Social Care letters you may have received.

If you are unable to hear on the phone and need to contact us with regards to your appointment you can email us at MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net.

Do you need this information in another format or language?

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, including Braille, large print, CD, audio tape please contact the telephone number **028 9615 8900** or e-mail address MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net, and we will do our best to meet your needs.

Polish - Czy potrzebujesz tych informacji w innym formacie lub języku?

Fundusz ma dostęp do usług w zakresie tłumaczeń ustnych i pisemnych. Jeśli potrzebujesz tych informacji w innym języku lub formacie, w tym w piśmie Braille'a, dużym druku, na płycie CD, kasecie magnetofonowej, skontaktuj się z nami pod numerem telefonu lub adresem e-mail **028 9615 8900 / MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net**, a my dołożymy wszelkich starań, aby spełnić Twoje potrzeby.

Arabic - هل تحتاج هذه المعلومات بصيغة أو بلغة أخرى؟

تستطيع الجمعية توفير خدمات الترجمة الفورية والتحريرية. إذا احتجت هذه المعلومات بلغة أو بصيغة أخرى، بما فيها صيغة برايل Braille أو صيغة بالأحرف الكبيرة، أو في سي دي CD أو في شريط مسموع، يُرجى الاتصال برقم التليفون أو عبر البريد الإلكتروني **MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net / 028 9615 8900**، وسوف نبذل قصارى جهدنا في تلبية احتياجاتك.

Lithuanian - Ar jums reikia šios informacijos kitu formatu ar kalba?

Tarnyba gali suteikti vertimo žodžiu ir raštu paslaugas. Jei reikia šios informacijos kita kalba ar formatu, įskaitant Brailio raštą, didelį šriftą, kompaktinį diską, garso įrašą, skambinkite telefonu arba susisiekite el. paštu **MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net / 028 9615 8900** ir mes padarysime viską, kad patenkintume jūsų poreikius.

Romanian - Aveți nevoie de aceste informații într-un alt format sau altă limbă?

Trustul are acces la servicii de interpretariat și traducere. Dacă aveți nevoie de aceste informații într-o altă limbă sau într-un alt format, inclusiv Braille, tipărire cu caractere de mari dimensiuni, CD, înregistrare audio, atunci vă rugăm să ne contactați la numărul de telefon sau la adresa de e-mail **MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net / 028 9615 8900**, iar noi vom face tot posibilul pentru satisfacerea necesităților dumneavoastră.

Tetum - Ita presiza atu informasaun ida ne'e iha formatu ka lian seluk ka lae?

Fidusiáriu ida ne'e iha asesu ba servisu durubasa no tradusaun. Se Ita presiza informasaun ida ne'e iha lian ka formatu seluk, inklui letra Braile, letra boot, CD, kasete audio, entaun favór telefone númeru ka enderesu e-mail **MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net / 028 9615 8900**, no ami sei halo esforsu tomak atu kumpre Ita-nia nesesidade sira.