

## CHG to Prevent Central Line Bloodstream Infections

A “central line” is a tube that is placed into a large vein, often in the neck, chest, arm, or groin. The central line is used to give medicines. A catheter-associated bloodstream infection (CLABSI) can occur when bacteria or other germs travel down a central line and enter the blood. There are proven steps your healthcare team follows to decrease the risk of getting a CLABSI.

### Symptoms of CLABSI

If you get a catheter-associated bloodstream infection (CLABSI), you may have:

- Low blood pressure
- Fevers
- Chills
- Confusion
- Changes in your breathing
- Decreased urine output

### Severe Infections

A CLABSI is a very serious infection. Severe infections can lead to:

- Septic shock (collapse of blood pressure due to infection)
- Organ damage or failure
- Abnormal blood clotting
- Loss of fingers, toes, and limbs
- Longer hospital stays
- Death

### How a CLABSI Develops

The central line catheter serves as an entry point for germs outside the body to enter the bloodstream. These germs can cause local or widespread infections that can lead to serious health problems. The longer a central line remains in place, the higher the risk of infection.

## Ways to Prevent CLABSI

### Daily Chlorhexidine (CHG) Treatment

- You will have daily CHG treatments to reduce the number of germs on your skin. This soap kills germs on your skin for a longer time than other soaps.
- CHG has been shown to help reduce hospital acquired infections.
- CHG may also decrease the risk of clinicians passing bacteria from one patient to another.

### Removal of Central Line

We will remove your central line as soon as it is no longer needed. We will not keep a central line in place just for blood draws. The risk for infection is too great.

### How You Can Prevent CLABSI

- Don't pick at the line or dressing. Let your nurse know if your dressing becomes loose.
- Do **not** disconnect any infusions. Tell your nurse if a disconnection occurs.
- Help schedule your daily CHG treatment.
- Don't let your IV tubing drag on the floor.
- Avoid coughing or sneezing near your central line. Tell your nurse if your dressing becomes soiled.
- Ask your healthcare team about the plan to remove the central line.