

Pros of fistulas:

- Usually lasts longer than other accesses
- Has fewer problems
- Once healed you can shower, bathe, and swim
- Generally the longest lasting access for hemodialysis

Cons of fistulas:

- Should not be used for dialysis until approximately 6 weeks after surgery
- Sometimes the fistula does not develop



Keeping a fistula healthy

The arm where the surgery is done is called an access arm.

Protect this arm by not allowing any blood work, immunizations, blood sugar (glucose) monitoring, blood pressures, or an intravenous (IV) on that arm.

Avoid any pressure on your fistula that limits blood flow.

Wash your hands and fistula with warm water and soap.



Kidney Health Program Access Nurses

Available Monday to Friday
7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Northern Saskatchewan

St. Paul's Hospital

Phone: 306-655-5482

Southern Saskatchewan

Regina General Hospital

Phone: 306-766-4209

For 24 hour professional health advice and information, call:



The information in this brochure is provided for educational/information purposes only. It does not represent medical advice and should not substitute for advice given by your physician or healthcare provider.

The information and photographs on this brochure is resourced from BC Renal Agency.

Website: www.bcrenalagency.ca



saskhealthauthority.ca

Healthy People, Healthy Saskatchewan



Your Hemodialysis Access



January 2024

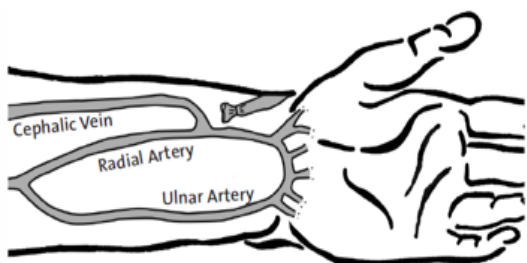
Fistula Information

Fistula

A fistula is made by surgically joining your artery to a vein in your arm. The blood flow in the vein causes it to get bigger.

Fistulas are made in the arm with the best available blood vessels. Your non dominant arm is used first. If you are right handed, the fistula will be in your left arm.

This procedure is a usually day surgery so you do not have to stay in the hospital overnight.



Each time you have hemodialysis treatment:

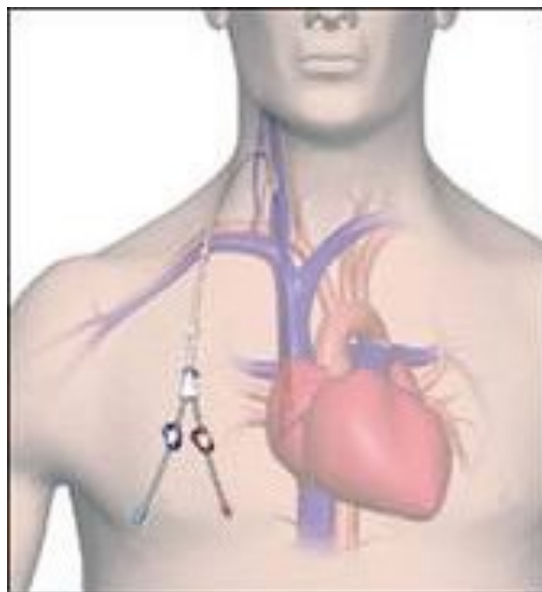
- A needle with a tube is inserted into the fistula and takes blood to the dialysis machine to be cleaned
- Another tube returns the clean blood back to your body.
- This process happens continuously during the dialysis treatment.

Why not catheters?

Catheters are not the first choice for long-term treatment because they can damage blood vessels and have a higher chance of not working.

Patients with catheters have:

- Increased risk of hospital stay
- High risk of infections
- More procedures done to keep the catheter working
- Higher risk of death



Go for fistulas!

Speak with your doctor about access options. The sooner you do this, the more options you have to help make a decision.

Fistulas are the best choice for dialysis access options!

