



PROTECT the Lifeline

CARING FOR YOUR DIALYSIS ACCESS



Your access is
your lifeline.
Protect it,
preserve it,
live well!



A dialysis access (fistula or graft) is a special connection between an artery and a vein. It acts as your lifeline during dialysis. Protecting it helps it last longer and keeps you healthier.



DO



Wash your access arm daily with soap and water.



Check for a **THRILL** (vibration) every day.



Listen for a **BRUIT** (whooshing sound) every day.



Exercise your access arm as directed.



Protect your arm from cuts, scrapes and pressure.



Keep all dialysis and medical appointments.

*Small
Care
Today,
Stronger
Lifeline
Tomorrow.*



DON'T



Do NOT take blood pressure on this arm.



Do NOT start IVs or give injections in this arm.



Do NOT draw blood from this arm.



Do NOT wear tight clothing or jewelry on this arm.



Do NOT sleep on this arm.



Do NOT carry heavy bags on this arm.



VITALITY MEMORY BOOST™

P.R.O.T.E.C.T. THE LIFELINE

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Preserve your access – it's your lifeline.

Respect your arm – no BP, IVs, or blood draws.

Observe daily for thrill and bruit.

Treat your arm gently – avoid pressure.

Exercise as directed to keep it strong.

Check for signs of problems.

Tell your nurse right away if something is wrong.

**PROTECT THE LIFELINE,
PROTECT YOUR LIFE.**



WARNING SIGNS

Contact your nurse or provider immediately if you notice:

- No thrill (vibration) or bruit (sound)
- Redness, warmth, swelling
- Pain, tenderness or pus
- Bleeding that won't stop
- Numbness, coolness or swelling of your hand or arm



WHAT IS YOUR LIFELINE?

Your access is used to take blood to the dialysis machine and return clean blood back to your body.



No access. No dialysis. No life.

TIPS FOR A STRONG LIFELINE



Stay hydrated (follow your fluid allowance).



Follow your renal diet.



Attend all dialysis treatments.



Communicate with your healthcare team.



Protect your access every day!



DID YOU KNOW?

A well-cared-for fistula can last for many years.

Fistulas are the best type of access and have the lowest risk of infection and clots.

Your daily care makes a **BIG** difference!

Need more information?



Visit our website for more resources, downloads, and courses!



www.vitalityedu.org

Scan the QR code to explore our Dialysis Basics course and more!



BECAUSE LIFE IS VITAL.

EDUCATE. EMPOWER. ELEVATE.

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