

# Troubleshooting a Central Line

## Infections

Infection is a serious risk associated with having a line. Appropriate handling decreases the risk of infection. Monitor your child's line site for signs of infection:

- Redness
- Drainage
- Swelling

Fever is also a sign of infection and should be treated as an emergency. Follow the instructions given to you by your healthcare provider if your child has a fever or signs of an infection.

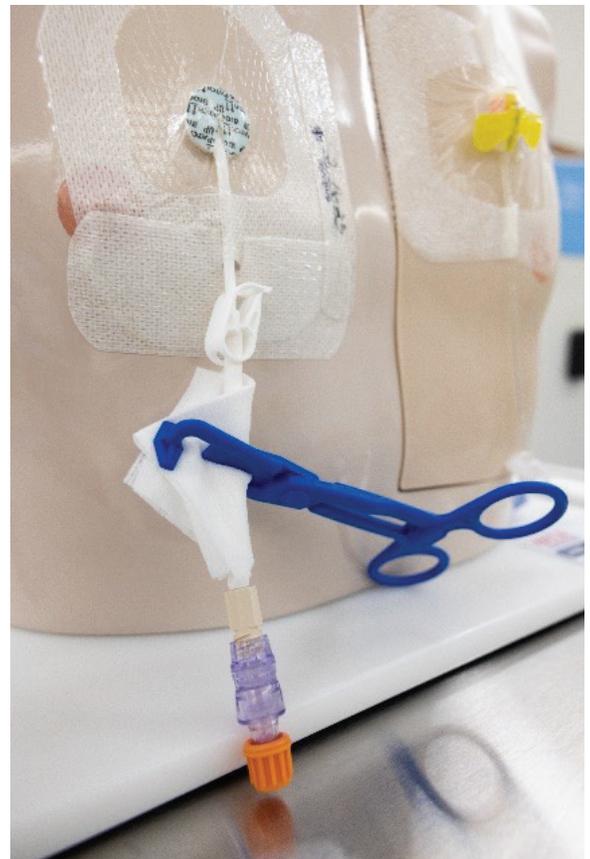
**Clotting:** The line can sometimes become clogged or clotted with blood or medicine. If this happens, the line will either be hard to flush or not flush at all. Do NOT force a flush. Call your home health nurse, or your child's healthcare provider.

**Blood or Fluid Leaking:** Blood or fluid will leak from the end of the line if the cap is loose or broken. If you see blood or fluid leaking:

1. Look at the cap carefully.
  - a. Is it on correctly?
  - b. Does it have any cracks?
2. If so, immediately clamp your line.
3. Replace the broken or loose cap as instructed or call your home health nurse.

**Central Line Break or Crack:** Blood or IV fluids will leak from the line if it breaks, cracks, or tears. If you see a hole or crack:

1. Cover the broken area of the line with sterile gauze.
2. Clamp the tubing between the break and the skin with the emergency clamp.
3. Come to the emergency department right away.



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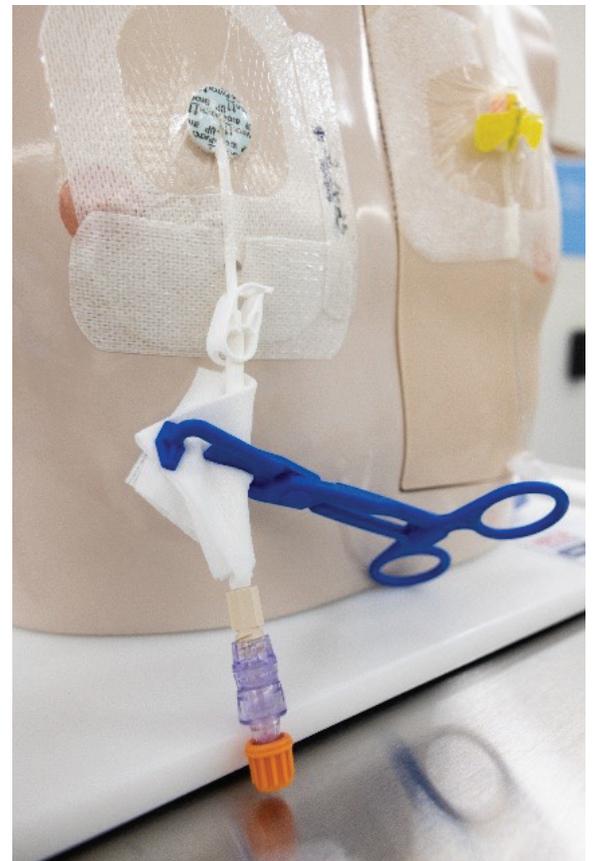
**Pulling Out of the Central Line:** Your child's nurse will show you ways to secure the line to keep it from being pulled. If the line is accidentally pulled out:

1. Put a sterile gauze over the site and press with your hand for 5-10 minutes.
2. Place a sterile dressing over the site.
3. Call your child's health care provider and go immediately to the emergency department.
4. Bring the line with you.



**Air Bubbles:** Air can get in the line if the line is broken or if caps are not properly sealed. This could lead to serious problems for your child such as trouble breathing, confusion, feeling lightheaded, dizziness, or chest pain. If this happens:

1. Clamp the line between any breaks in the line and where the line enters the skin. If you cannot see a break, clamp near the skin.
2. Place your child on their **left** side with their head lower than their feet.
3. Call 911.



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