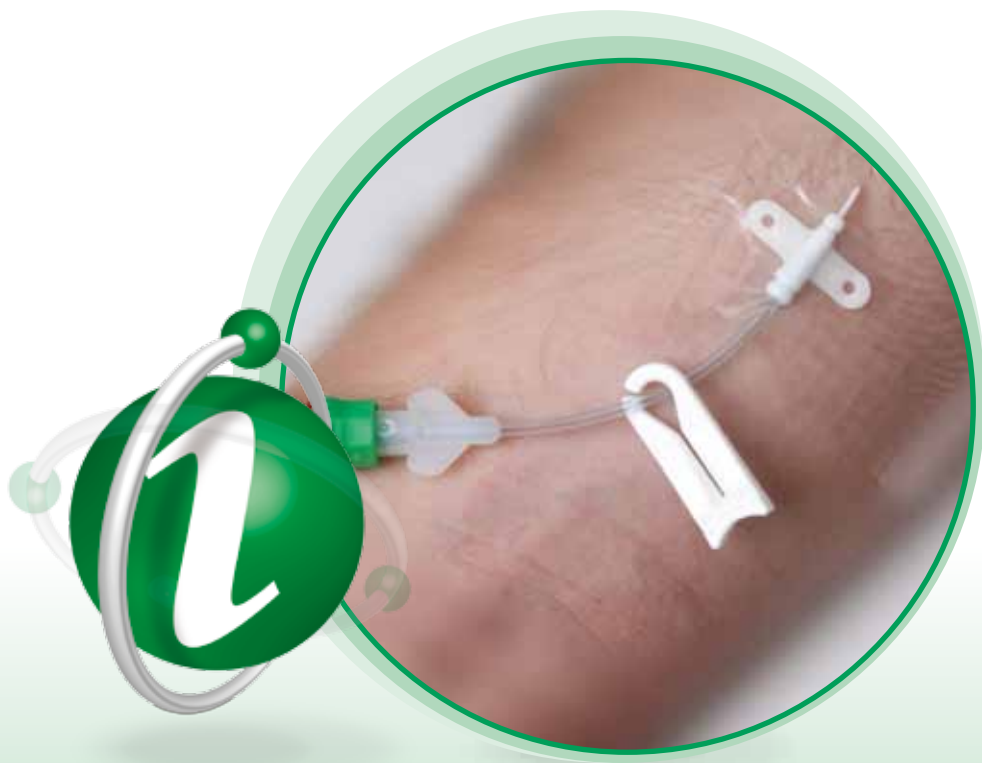




Caring for your Catheter

Leaderflex



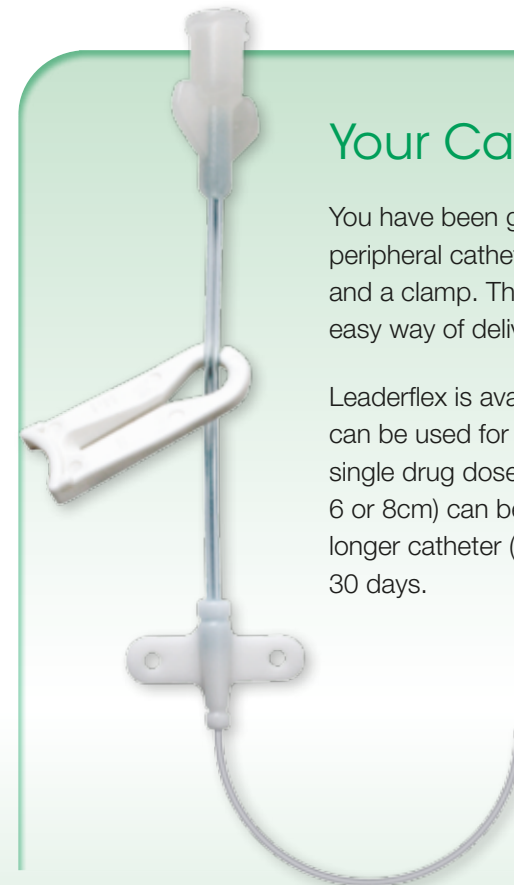
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Peripheral IV Catheters

During your treatment you may need to be given drugs or fluids frequently, or for an extended period. These are usually given via a vein in your arm, but inserting a needle or cannula for each dose can cause damage to your veins, which can be very painful for you.

To reduce this, your healthcare professional has decided to insert a peripheral catheter, which can be left in place and used repeatedly. You will normally be given a peripheral catheter when you need frequent doses, or if your treatment is expected to last 1 week or more.



Your Catheter

You have been given a Leaderflex polyurethane peripheral catheter, which has an integral extension and a clamp. This should provide a comfortable and easy way of delivering your treatment.

Leaderflex is available in four different lengths, and can be used for infusions of fluids or drugs, and for single drug doses (a bolus). The shorter lengths (4, 6 or 8cm) can be left in place for 1-2 weeks, and the longer catheter (20cm) can be left in place for up to 30 days.

Caring for your Leaderflex

Catheter at Home

Depending on what your healthcare professional has recommended, you may need to take care of your catheter. The following are guidelines, but you should always follow instructions given to you by your healthcare professional.

Care of the exit site

Check the exit site for any swelling, redness or pain. If you have any of the symptoms described in the troubleshooting guide on the opposite page, you should follow the instructions given and contact your healthcare professional as indicated.

Soiled, wet or loose dressings

You can change the dressing yourself if you have been shown how, otherwise you should return to the hospital for the dressing to be changed.

Bathing and showers

You can bathe and shower while you have a Leaderflex, but you must take care to keep the catheter and dressing completely dry. Cover the entire catheter and dressing with an additional waterproof dressing, and secure all the edges with tape. Ask your healthcare professional for any further recommendations.

Troubleshooting

Problems	Symptoms	What to do
Air entering the bloodstream	You experience shortness of breath, chest pain or coughing.	Stop infusion immediately. Position yourself on your left side with your head down. Inform Hospital and Emergency Services.
The catheter breaks or you accidentally cut the catheter	Blood leaking from catheter or extension.	Stop infusion, contact your healthcare professional.
Skin infection or soreness	You will notice redness, swelling and tenderness at catheter exit site.	Contact your healthcare professional. Always follow the correct Guidelines Procedure for handling and cleaning catheter, as instructed by your healthcare professional.
Catheter blocked / infusion stops	Drug or infusion will not flow through catheter.	Contact your healthcare professional. You may have a clot in the catheter. Your healthcare professional may infuse a drug to dissolve the clot or remove the catheter.
Phlebitis	Small area of redness can be seen around catheter exit site and radiating up the arm.	Contact your healthcare professional. Phlebitis can be successfully solved with early treatment.
Leaking of blood or fluid	Possible hole in catheter or extension.	Stop infusion and contact your healthcare professional immediately.

Handwashing Technique

A nine step handwashing technique was devised by Ayliffe et al (1978), and it is used regularly by healthcare professionals. Using it yourself may improve the care of your catheter. The technique uses soap or an antiseptic solution and running water, and each step consists of five strokes forward and five backward.



STEP ONE
Wet hands thoroughly before applying washing agent.



STEP TWO
Rub palm to palm.



STEP THREE
Right palm over back of left hand and left palm over back of right hand.



STEP FOUR
Palm to palm fingers interlaced.



STEP FIVE
Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked.



STEP SIX
Wash each thumb by clapping and rotating in the palm of the opposite hand.



STEP SEVEN
Rotational rubbing back and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa.



STEP EIGHT
Rinse hands under running water.



STEP NINE
Dry hands thoroughly.

Glossary of Terms

Catheter	A special plastic tube inserted into your arm, to deliver drugs and infusions straight into your vein.
Exit site	Where the catheter enters your skin.
Phlebitis	Irritation to the vein and surrounding skin.
Extension	Tubing connected to the catheter to help with infusion of drugs and fluids.
Peripheral	Relating to, or situated near the surface of the body.
I.V. drug therapy	Intravenous drugs administered directly into the vein.
Polyurethane catheter	A special plastic tube made of a soft material, inserted into your vein to deliver drugs and infusions.
Healthcare Professional	The doctor or nurse looking after your Leaderflex catheter.

Important Information

Your Leaderflex Information

Code number:.....

Length:..... Date of insertion:.....

In case of queries please contact:.....

Name:.....

Title:

Telephone Number:.....

Special Instructions

Your healthcare professional may ask you to help with the following procedures:

1. Dressing changes every.....days
(unless it becomes wet or falls off).
2. Your catheter should be flushed everydays and after drug administration.
3. Your own instructions:

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Notes

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Vygon (UK) Ltd
Bridge Road
Cirencester
Gloucestershire
GL7 1PT

Tel: 01285 657051
Fax: 01285 650293
Web: www.vygon.co.uk
Email: vygon@vygon.co.uk