

## How Can I Help Prevent CLABSI as a Patient?

- Ask your health care providers why you need a catheter and how long you will have it.
- Remind all health care providers to clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after caring for you.
- Actively participate in your care and ask the health care team questions.
- Avoid touching the central line; if it becomes dirty or red, notify your health care provider.
- Agree to bathing daily with a special “soap” called chlorhexidine.
- Remind your health care providers to remove the catheter if no longer needed.

### Make sure your visitors:

- Clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after their visit.
- Do not touch the central line.

If you have any questions, please ask your health care providers.



## Patient Education: Central Line-Associated Bloodstream Infection (CLABSI)

Information for patients who have been diagnosed with **CLABSI**



**Mount  
Sinai**

## What is a Central Line?

A central line, also known as a catheter, is a tube placed in a large vein. The large vein can be in the neck, chest, arm or groin. The central line is required for special types of medications, dialysis or when IV medications are needed for a long time. A central line can be left in place for several weeks, and depending on the type of catheter, even months.

## What is a CLABSI?

Central Line-Associated Bloodstream Infection (CLABSI) is a serious but treatable infection that occurs when bacteria or other germs enter the blood through the central line or its dressing.



**Mount  
Sinai**

## How Do I Know If I May Have a CLABSI?

Symptoms include:

- Fever and chills
- Sore and red skin around the catheter

## How is a CLABSI Treated?

Treatment for this type of infection is with antibiotics. Sometimes the catheter needs to be removed and replaced.

## How Can Health Care Providers Prevent CLABSI?

- Clean hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after caring for the patient, when inserting a central line, when using the central line and when caring for the central line dressing.
- Wear sterile gloves, mask, cap and gown when inserting the central line. Also, cover the patient with a sterile sheet and clean the patient's skin with antiseptic cleanser before putting in the central line.
- Wash hands, wear gloves and clean the catheter opening before using it to draw blood or give medications or fluids.
- CHG Treatment: Use special bathing wipes to disinfect the skin.

- Regularly change the dressing (bandage) that covers the area where the catheter goes into the skin.
- Check every day to see if the central line is needed, and remove it as soon as possible.
- Carefully handle medications and fluids given through the central line.

## How patients with central lines can get infected with germs

