Going Home after a Hemodialysis Catheter Removal

Discomfort
You might have some pain after the catheter is taken out. Please use only Tylenol® or pain medicine offered to you by your doctor or nurse. Avoid aspirin, Motrin®, Aleve®, or any other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medicine. These types of medicine could cause bleeding. Talk to your dialysis nurse or kidney doctor if you still have pain after two days that is getting in the way of your sleep or if it is making it hard to care for yourself.

Bleeding
Some slight bleeding can occur. If blood soaks through your dressings, or if you notice a lump under your skin at the site of your former access, please call us. If you have severe bleeding or trouble breathing, call 911. If you can hold pressure right over the spot, and if it seems to slow or stop with the pressure, you may have someone drive you to the emergency room. Think about safety as you make this choice. 911 is a better choice if you are not sure of your safety.

To restart blood thinners
If you have been on Coumadin® or Plavix®, speak to your doctor about when these should be resumed. They are held for a few days before and after removal in most cases, but ask what is best for you.

Signs of infection
- Redness/tenderness at the site.
- Pus or drainage from the site.
- A fever greater than 100.5° F.

Call your kidney doctor or talk to your dialysis nurse if you see any of these problems. Infection can quickly make you very ill.

Care of the site
No routine care is needed. At your next treatment the dialysis nurse can remove the dressings. If you are no longer on dialysis, please wait 24 hours until you remove the dressing. If you had some oozing, you can cover with more gauze and tape and leave until your next treatment. You may bathe or shower after the dressing is removed.

Phone Numbers
UW Dialysis Clinic, 608-263-8748, after hours this number will be answered by the paging operator. Ask for the hemodialysis nurse on call. Leave your name and phone number. The nurse will call you back.

If you live out of the area, call 1-800-323-8942.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person’s health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright ©7/2017. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#6504.