vitalcare INFUSION SERVICES

Flushing Your Infusion Catheter

Introduction

Your intravenous catheter (IV) must be flushed after each use, and sometimes between uses, to prevent clotting and clogging of the catheter. Depending on your catheter type, you will be taught a "SAS Technique", which is flushing first with **s**aline, then **a**dministration of infusion, then **s**aline again. The other technique is the "SASH" method, which is flushing first with **s**aline, then **a**dministration of infusion, then **s**aline again, then with **h**eparin.

Supplies

- Alcohol wipes
- Saline and heparin flush syringes for each lumen

Steps

1. Clean your work area.
2. Gather your supplies.
3. Wash your hands with soap or alcohol based gel foam as taught by your nurse.
4. Clean the outer surface of the needleless connector on your IV catheter as taught by your nurse.
5. Without contaminating the tip of the syringe, remove the protective cover from the saline flush syringe. Hold the syringe straight up and remove any visible air from the syringe by gently pulling back, then pressing the plunger.
6. Without contaminating the tip of the syringe or needleless connector, attach (screw) the flush syringe onto the catheter's needleless connector.
7. If any clamps are present, open them.
8. Inject the saline into the catheter using the start-stop technique. Notice if there is any resistance or unusual sensations while you are flushing. Notice if there is any leakage around the cap or anywhere along the route of the catheter, or at the catheter site. If problems are noted, stop and call your nurse for help.
9. Remove the saline syringe when the prescribed amount has been injected.
10. If using a SASH technique, repeat steps 1 thru 9. Next, clean the outer surface of the needleless connector on your catheter as taught by your nurse.
11. Connect the heparin syringe and flush prescribed amount. Close all clamps once flush is completed.