

Types of Intravascular Catheters

Type	Description	Maintenance
Peripheral	Short peripheral catheter for short-term access needs (<10 days)	Flush with normal saline before and after access (at least daily); change the site, tubing, and dressing every 3-5 days or sooner as necessary
Midline	Antecubital insertion extending halfway to the superior vena cava for intermediate (1-6 weeks) access; not suitable for patients on total parenteral nutrition, hyperosmolar solutions, or chemotherapy	Flush with normal saline and heparin before and after access (at least daily); change dressing and cap weekly or sooner as necessary
Peripherally inserted central line	Antecubital or basilic insertion of central line that extends to the superior vena cava and is used for long-term central access	Flush with normal saline and heparin before and after access (at least daily); change dressing and cap weekly or sooner as necessary; do not get line wet
Central		
Perm-a-Cath, Vascath	Subclavian internal jugular or femoral insertion that extends to the superior or inferior vena cava; suitable for intermediate-term central access	Flush with normal saline before access; lock with heparin after infusion (at least daily); change sterile dressing three times weekly and as necessary; change cap weekly
Tunneled central line		
Groshong, Hickman, Broviac	A catheter that is tunneled under skin on the chest wall and inserted into the subclavian extending into the superior vena cava; suitable for extended central access over several months to years; requires surgical insertion	Flush with normal saline before access; lock with heparin after infusion or weekly if not in use; change dressing and cap weekly or sooner as necessary
Central port		
Port-a-Cath	Implanted subcutaneous access port with the catheter inserted into subclavian and extending centrally; suitable for long-term intermittent access	Flush with normal saline before access; lock with heparin after infusion or monthly if not in use; change sterile dressing three times weekly when accessed
Peripheral arterial catheter	Placed into radial or femoral artery for hemodynamic monitoring	Use continuous flush system; minimize manipulation; use disposable transducer; replace transducer at 96-hour intervals; do not routinely replace peripheral arterial catheters

Table from Physicians' Information and Education Resource (PIER), *Catheter-Related Intravascular Infections* module