

Clamp Usage Policy and Procedure

Purpose:

Clamps are not recommended on hemodialysis accesses because of damage and/or thrombosis that can occur by applying too much pressure. New and developing arteriovenous fistulae are particularly vulnerable to hematoma formation, infiltration, and bruising - clamps should never be used on these accesses.

Policy:

Using clamps on new or underdeveloped fistulas is prohibited.

The use of clamps post-dialysis to hold sites for mature fistulas and grafts should be restricted. If and when clamps are used on a mature fistula or graft, use one clamp at a time to prevent excessive pressure/thrombosis. Patients and/or family members should be instructed to hold sites, and if this is not possible, staff should hold access sites.

Procedure:

1. Following blood return and prior to removing needles, check blood pressure and ensure that the patient has achieved homeostasis.
2. After clamping lines and access needle tubing, disconnect machine tubing from the access needle tubing.
3. Carefully remove tape from one needle.
4. Using a sterile 4 x 4, place over needle site. Remove the needle at the same angle as the insertion angle, and once the needle is completely removed, apply pressure with two fingers.
5. Open the clamp and carefully position the clamp directly over your fingers.
6. Roll your fingers away as the clamp presses down over the needle site.
7. Make sure there is no bleeding through on the gauze around the clamp.
8. Check access for the presence of a thrill/bruit. If not present, adjust the clamp until you can feel the thrill and hear a bruit.
9. Leave clamp on for at least 10 minutes, or until bleeding has subsided - **NOT TO EXCEED 20 MINUTES. Check for thrill and bruit every 10 minutes.**
10. After bleeding has stopped, dress the site with new gauze and tape or with a bandaid.
11. Repeat Steps 3-10 for the second needle.
12. Instruct the patient to remove the dressing 3-4 hours following treatment.
13. Notify the charge nurse if the patient has prolonged bleeding or other abnormal symptoms.