



Oxford University Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

Oxford Kidney Unit

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

# Caring for my fistula or graft (AVF or AVG)

If you have a fistula or  
graft that doesn't stop  
bleeding,  
**call 999**

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[www.ouh.nhs.uk/information](http://www.ouh.nhs.uk/information)

Oxford Kidney Unit  
Website: [www.ouh.nhs.uk/oku](http://www.ouh.nhs.uk/oku)

OMI 53276P

My fistula or graft is very important. It is the only way I can have dialysis.

**Please help me look after my fistula or graft by:**

- Checking for a buzz or blood flow every day (if I cannot do this).
- Not putting name bands on or taking BP readings from the limb.
- Not cannulating or taking blood from it (ONLY in a life threatening situation).
- Looking for signs of infection.

## What to do if your fistula or graft starts bleeding

- This can be **life threatening** and needs **urgent treatment**.
- Shout for help immediately. Dial 999 and tell them you are bleeding from a dialysis fistula.
- Apply firm pressure over the bleeding site. Use a bottle top (inside facing your skin), or your thumb. Press exactly over the bleeding point.
- Ask someone to press on your fistula scar to slow the blood flow.
- Don't use a towel or absorbent cloth, as this will not stop the bleeding.
- Lie down. Ask someone to lift your fistula limb higher than your heart.
- Go to hospital even if the bleeding stops, to see a renal doctor or surgeon.