Caring for my fistula or graft (AVF or AVG)

If you have a fistula or graft that doesn’t stop bleeding, call 999
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.