

Fistula Needling Techniques



Buttonhole

A sharp needle is placed into the fistula through the same hole in skin, into the same place in vein at same angle, depth and direction every time. After several sessions a track develops allowing blunt needles to be used which should be less painful.



Rope ladder

A sharp needle is placed into the fistula every dialysis session. The needling site moves up the fistula vein in a systematic manner, at least 5 to 10mm from the last site. Once all the fistula has been used (ie one has reached the top), the needles are placed at the bottom again in rotation. Sharp needles must always be used.



Area puncture

This is not a recommended practice

This happens when sharp needles are placed in the same area over and over but not rotated regularly or button holed.

Complications associated with area puncture include:

- Risk of developing lumps on the fistula
- The fistula becoming unsightly
- Risk of the skin becoming thin causing ulceration and/or bleeding

THE CHOICE IS YOURS

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