

Living with Your Arteriovenous Fistula (AVF) or Arteriovenous Graft (AVG)

You are receiving hemodialysis through your Arteriovenous Fistula (AVF) or Arteriovenous Graft (AVG).

Your AVF or AVG is your lifeline, and it is important to avoid infection and keep the access working properly.

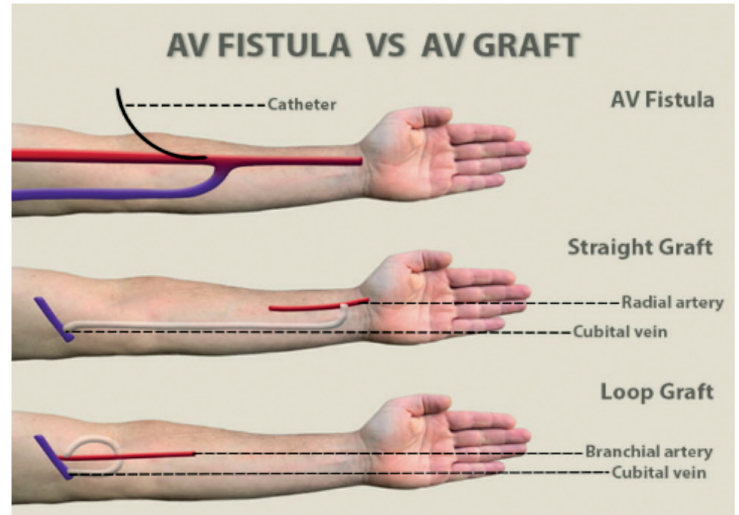
The arm in which your AVF or AVG is inserted is often called your access arm.

What are AVF and AVG?

Arteriovenous Fistula (AVF):

An AVF is made by connecting an artery and a vein, usually in the arm.

Arteriovenous Graft (AVG): An AVG uses a synthetic tube to connect an artery and a vein.



Important Things to Remember About Your AVF/AVG:

DO	DON'T
Prevent Infection: Wash your hands with soap and water before touching the access site. Wash your access site prior to each dialysis treatment.	Don't Apply Pressure: Avoid wearing tight clothing, watches, or bracelets on the access arm.
Feel for the Thrill: Check daily for the vibration of blood flow. This shows the access is working.	Don't Sleep on Your Access Arm: This can damage the AVF or AVG.
Listen for the Bruit: Listen daily for the "whooshing" sound in the access. This also means the access is working well.	Don't Use the Access Arm for Blood Pressure or Bloodwork: Ask your healthcare team to use your other arm.
Check for Infection: Look for redness, warmth, swelling, pain, or pus near the access site. These are signs of infection.	Don't let animals touch the access site: Licking and scratching by animals leads to infection or damage to the access site.
If it Seems Different, Let Us Know: Tell your healthcare team if you notice any changes like numbness, tingling, pain, or discoloration in the access arm, or don't feel the Thrill or hear the Bruit.	Don't leave your pressure dressing on overnight: Ask your care team what time you should remove your pressure dressing.

Always consult with your healthcare team if you notice changes or have questions.