

# Ways to Prevent Aneurysms in Fistulas & Grafts

## What is an aneurysm?

A bulging in the wall of the vein.

## How do aneurysms form?

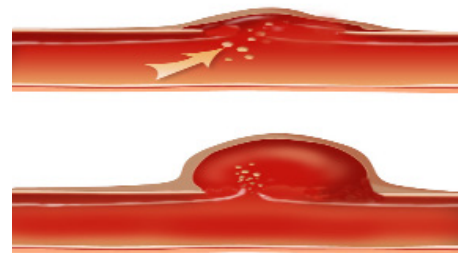
Repeated needle insertions in the same area. This causes the vein to weaken and bulge.



## Why are aneurysms a problem?

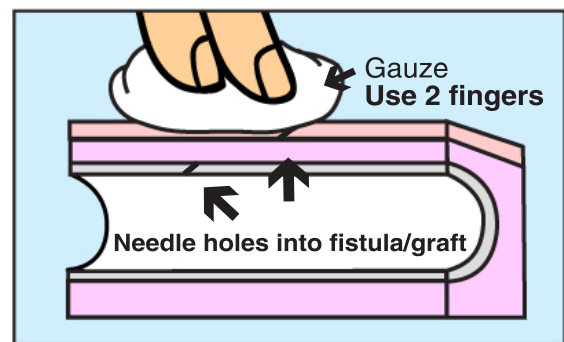
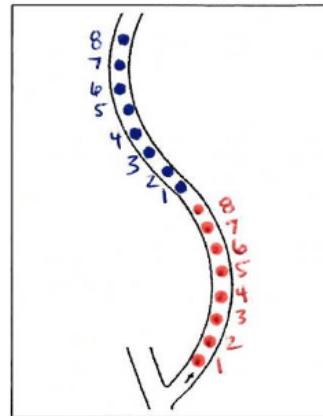
Aneurysms:

- Cause the skin to become white and shiny. It may also cause skin breakdown.
- Increase the bleeding time after needles are removed.
- Can cause an access to clot or rupture.



## How can aneurysms be prevented?

1. Make sure your access is needled in a new place each dialysis session (called “rotating the sites”). See image →
2. If you use EMLA cream, ask your nurse before leaving the dialysis unit which sites are likely to be needled at your next session
3. Consider needling your own access. Ask your nurse for information
4. After dialysis, place firm pressure on the needle sites using two fingers for **at least** 10 minutes. If you are holding your own sites, the second needle should not be pulled until the first needle site has stopped bleeding.
5. When the bleeding stops, tape the gauze in place. **DO NOT** wrap the tape all around your arm. Take the gauze off 4-6 hours after your dialysis treatment. Expect scabs to form over the needle holes. Avoid scratching or picking the scabs.



How to hold pressure over the needle hole