

Monitoring the Newly Placed AV Fistula for Maturation Algorithm

At Each Treatment Physical Examination

- Extremity edema (swelling)
- Steal Syndrome (pain or numbness in fingers or hand indicating a shortage of blood to the hand, discoloration, cold to touch, delayed nail bed capillary refill)
- Skin integrity (waxy, sores, draining from incisions)
- Bruising/hematoma
- Collateral vein distension (veins in access arm close to AV fistula becoming larger)
- Pain or numbness
- Evidence of infection

Teach patients:

1. To feel the AV fistula for the thrill several times a day to ensure patency.
2. To report absence of thrill immediately to the dialysis staff.
3. To examine incision sites for signs and symptoms of infection.
4. To keep access clean at all times.
5. To use access site only for dialysis.
6. To protect their access arm, not to allow blood pressure cuffs, blood draws, or IVs.
7. To avoid extended pressure on their access arm.
 - a. Avoid jewelry or tight clothes over their access site.
 - b. To not sleep with their arm under their head or body.
 - c. To not carry heavy items (backpacks/purses or groceries) on the access.

