

Journal of Visualized Experiments

A protocol to set up needle-free connector with positive displacement on central venous catheter in intensive care unit --Manuscript Draft--

Article Type:	Invited Methods Article - Author Produced Video
Manuscript Number:	JoVE59801R2
Full Title:	A protocol to set up needle-free connector with positive displacement on central venous catheter in intensive care unit
Keywords:	Infusions, intravenous; Intensive Care Unit; Central Venous Catheters; Vascular Access Devices; Needle-free Connectors; human
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TITLE**A Protocol to Set Up Needle-Free Connector with Positive Displacement on Central Venous Catheter in Intensive Care Unit****AUTHORS AND AFFILIATIONS:**

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KEYWORDS:

Infusions, Intravenous, Intensive Care Unit, Central Venous Catheters, Vascular Access Devices, Needle-free Connectors.

SUMMARY:

We present a protocol to show the installation of a needle-free connector with positive displacement on a central venous catheter.

ABSTRACT:

Needle-free connectors were initially designed and promoted to avoid blood exposure for healthcare workers. Some recent data suggest that the latest generation of connectors (with positive displacement) may be of interest for reducing central venous line infections. We have been using needle-free connectors for several years in our intensive care unit and here we present a protocol for installing these connectors on central venous catheters. After insertion of the catheter and control of the permeability of the lines, the connectors must be purged with 0.9% NaCl before being connected. The connectors replace all disposable caps used on infusion stopcocks and manifolds. All the connectors are changed every 7 days as recommended by the manufacturer (except when there is macroscopic contamination, which requires an immediate change of the connector). Before each injection, the connector must be disinfected for at least 3 seconds with 70% isopropyl alcohol. The connectors must not be disconnected (unless changed), as the injection is done through the device. Setting up the connectors slightly increases the total time required to place the catheter and there is no formal evidence that these connectors reduce the incidence of infectious or thrombotic complications. However, these devices simplify the

management of central venous lines and prevent the catheter circuit from "opening" once it has been sterilely installed.

INTRODUCTION:

Central venous catheter-related infections (CRI) are a severe complication of central venous catheters in intensive care unit (ICU). The decline in CRI remains an ever-present objective, with a final goal of "zero catheter related infection"¹. Needle-free connectors were initially designed and promoted to avoid blood exposure for healthcare workers. There are two main designs of connectors: split septum (no internal moving parts) and closed valve systems (internal moving components) but both designs can be combined in one connector². Needle-free connectors are categorized according to the type of fluid displacement that occurs after disconnection of a male Luer valve: negative (blood reflux into the catheter), neutral, and positive (with a push of blood out of the catheter lumen)^{2,3}.

Some connectors have been described as a cause of catheter-related infections, in particular in the intensive care unit (ICU)⁴⁻⁶. A new generation of needle-free connectors with minimal internal complexity, a reduction or elimination of interstitial or dead space, a visible fluid path to help assess proper flushing technique, and a flat access surface, etc. has been designed to lower the risk of infection. In vitro, these connectors have shown low bacterial colonization⁷. There are global recommendations from the laboratory manufacturing these connectors; however, there is no practical description of how to install them on catheters⁸. Hence, it is possible that each team uses them differently. Therefore, we propose a formalized protocol for the installation of these connectors on central venous lines in the ICU.

We present the installation of a positive pressure needleless connector (PPNC) with an internal silicone piston in our ICU but this protocol is applicable with any positive displacement valve. This valve is a mechanical needle-free connector with positive displacement.

PROTOCOL:

1. Preparation of connectors and infusion lines

1.1. Sterilely retrieve the connectors.

1.2. On the 3-way extension stopcock, screw 1 connector into each socket of the stopcock and 1 connector into the end of the extension line. Take 0.9% NaCl with a 50 mL syringe to purge the extension and the lines. Purge each 3-way extension with 0.9% NaCl through the 2 connectors of the stopcock.

1.3. Take the infusion manifold. Unscrew each single-use cap. Screw 1 connector into each socket of the manifold to replace the caps. Purge the infusion line through each connector by turning each stopcock sequentially.

NOTE: At the end of this step, there are 3 extensions with 3-way stopcock with purged connectors

and an infusion manifold with purged connectors.

2. Placement of the catheter

2.1. Place the central venous catheter sterilely according to usual practice in the unit or a previously described protocol⁹.

2.2. Check the permeability of each line by aspiration of blood and then reinjection of 0.9% NaCl serum. Clamp the lines.

3. Installation of the connectors

3.1. Screw the extension's connector of each 3-way extension stopcock into each catheter line. These connectors, directly connected to the lines of the catheter, are the "proximal connectors". Unclamp the lines.

3.2. Connect the infusion manifold line to one of the connectors of the 3-way stopcock of the distal line.

NOTE: There is no need to place a vein guard on the manifold or extensions.

4. Use of connectors and infusion lines

4.1. Before each infusion, disinfect the end of the connector for 3 s with a sterile compress soaked in 70% isopropyl alcohol. Connect the syringe or tubing directly to the connector by screwing and injecting. After injection or infusion, unscrew the device. Do not remove the connector.

4.2. If needed, rinse an unused line with 3 mL of saline. There is no need to clamp or infuse an unused line with a vein guard. Leave the proximal valve in place even if the line is not perfused.

5. Replacement and maintenance of connectors and infusion lines

5.1. Always change the connectors every 7 days except for the proximal connectors. Thus, every week, the nurse prepares the extensions with 3-way stopcock and the infusion manifold in sterile conditions (see step 1).

5.2. Unscrew the used extensions at the proximal valve and screw the new sterile and purged extensions to the catheter on the proximal connector (see step 3).

5.3. Only change a proximal connector if it is soiled (to maintain the catheter in a "closed" system).

5.4. In case of macroscopic contamination, rinse the connector with 10 mL of 0.9% NaCl. If there

is still contamination, replace the connector. In the event of transfusion, infusion of lipid solution (e.g. propofol) or parenteral nutrition, change the tubing and connectors of the line concerned every 24 hours.

5.5. Change other infusion lines and tubing according to the practices and protocols of each unit.

REPRESENTATIVE RESULTS:

Once all the elements are in place, the catheter has connectors on almost all the junctions between two infusion lines (**Figure 1**). Thus, it has proximal connectors on each line and two connectors on the sockets of the 3-way extensions (**Figure 2**). Each infusion line has connectors at all its female sockets (**Figure 3**). Once the assembly is in place, any injection or infusion (continuous or discontinuous) must be made, after disinfection, through one of the connectors of the infusion lines or extensions (**Figure 4**).

Maintaining the connectors in place keeps the infusion system closed as well as sterile mounted and minimizes the risk of bacterial contamination. One of our previous works, the first study that prospectively analyzed these devices over several years, showed a significant decrease in CRI incidence during the six-year period framing the introduction of the connectors (**Figure 5**)¹⁰. In this work, the incidence of CRI before using connectors was 6.2 CRI/1000 catheter-day vs. 2.7 CRI/1000 catheter-days after using connectors¹⁰. Moreover, we did not find any increase of CRI after the beginning of connector use (**Figure 5**) and there was no significant difference concerning the kind of bacteria species involved in CRI¹⁰. We have not identified any specific complications associated with the use of these connectors during these years of use.

FIGURE AND TABLE LEGENDS:

Figure 1: Global view of the catheter once the connectors have been placed.

Figure 2: Proximal part of the catheter with proximal connectors (A) and connectors on the 3-way extension stopcock (B).

Figure 3: 4-port manifold with connectors.

Figure 4: Steps of injection through a connector. (A) Disinfect the surface of the connector for 3 seconds with 70% isopropyl alcohol. Wait until the connector is dry. **(B)** Insert the tip of the syringe or infuser into the connector. **(C)** Inject or infuse the medication. **(D)** Remove the syringe or infuser.

Figure 5: Evolution of catheter-related infection incidence before and after the use of connectors. Figure taken from Clavier et al.¹⁰

DISCUSSION:

Setting up the connectors slightly increases the total time required to place the catheter. However, their use has several advantages: no need to maintain a continuous saline perfusion for non-infused lines, rapid stopping of infusion of the lines if necessary (in case of urgent

transport of the patient for example), no need to use single-use caps several times a day to close the infusion lines. The use of connectors simplifies the daily use of catheter infusion lines without any particular complications. It should be noted that during our four year experience of these PPNC connectors there have been no complications with rapid fluid administration while this has been described with other types of connectors¹¹. It is essential to maintain complete asepsis when installing the connectors in order to keep the infusion system closed. In addition, regular examination of the connectors for contamination is essential to be able to rinse or change the implicated connectors and avoid bacterial growth. A recent work reports the in vitro efficacy of a pulsative flushing technique to prevent bacterial colonization of vascular access devices but this technique has not been evaluated directly on needleless connectors¹². Due to the technical aspect of this kind of connector, nurses must be trained before using these connectors in everyday practice. In this context, the use of Aseptic Non Touch Technique, which is a safe method for managing intravascular devices, is very relevant¹³. Thus, even after the connectors are set up, direct contact with the connectors should be minimized as much as possible to minimize the risk of contamination. In this context, the use of a disinfectant cap on needleless connectors can help to limit the contact with connectors and is effective in reducing central line-associated bloodstream infections¹⁴.

The inclusion of extension tubing, stopcocks and manifolds increase the complexity of the system and expose it to a risk of contamination of stopcocks and manifolds¹⁵. Our choice of extensions and infusion lines is the result of a reflection on the balance between patient safety and infectious risk. In the ICU, continuous uninterrupted infusion of certain drugs is essential (e.g., catecholamine, sedation). In our protocol, the use of a 3-way extension stopcock allows medication relays to be easily made without ever interrupting the infusion, which is a guarantee of safety for the patient. The use of a unique 4-port manifold with a perfusion line allows the infusion of several drugs simultaneously (e.g., antibiotics, analgesics, insulin) but the number of these manifolds should be limited to prevent the risk of infection.

Some studies have shown interest in a closed system to prevent colonization and catheter infections^{16,17}. Additionally, several studies have reported a decrease in catheter infection after using PPNCs^{10,18,19}. It is also possible that these connectors may decrease thrombotic catheter occlusions, but there is insufficient evidence to conclude a direct causal link between needleless connectors and catheter occlusions^{20,21}. Moreover, data in the literature support the safe and prolonged use of these devices^{10,16,19}. However, different department may sometimes use different methods to mount connectors on infusion lines and most studies do not describe the method used to install connectors on catheters. It could appear interesting that studies on connectors report their installation protocol to better assess potential differences of practice between teams.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

The authors are grateful to Nikki Sabourin-Gibbs, Rouen University Hospital, for her help in editing the manuscript. The authors would like to thank the communication department of Rouen University Hospital and the teams of the Medical Training Center for their participation in the video shoot.

DISCLOSURES:

TC, PG and BV previously conducted a study on PPNC valves. BD provided the connectors for this previous work but had no role in the trial initiation, study design, data collection, data analysis, data interpretation, writing of the report, or the decision to submit. The other authors have nothing to disclose. The drafting of this protocol was formalized in 2013 with validation by Carefusion consultants.

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Figure 1

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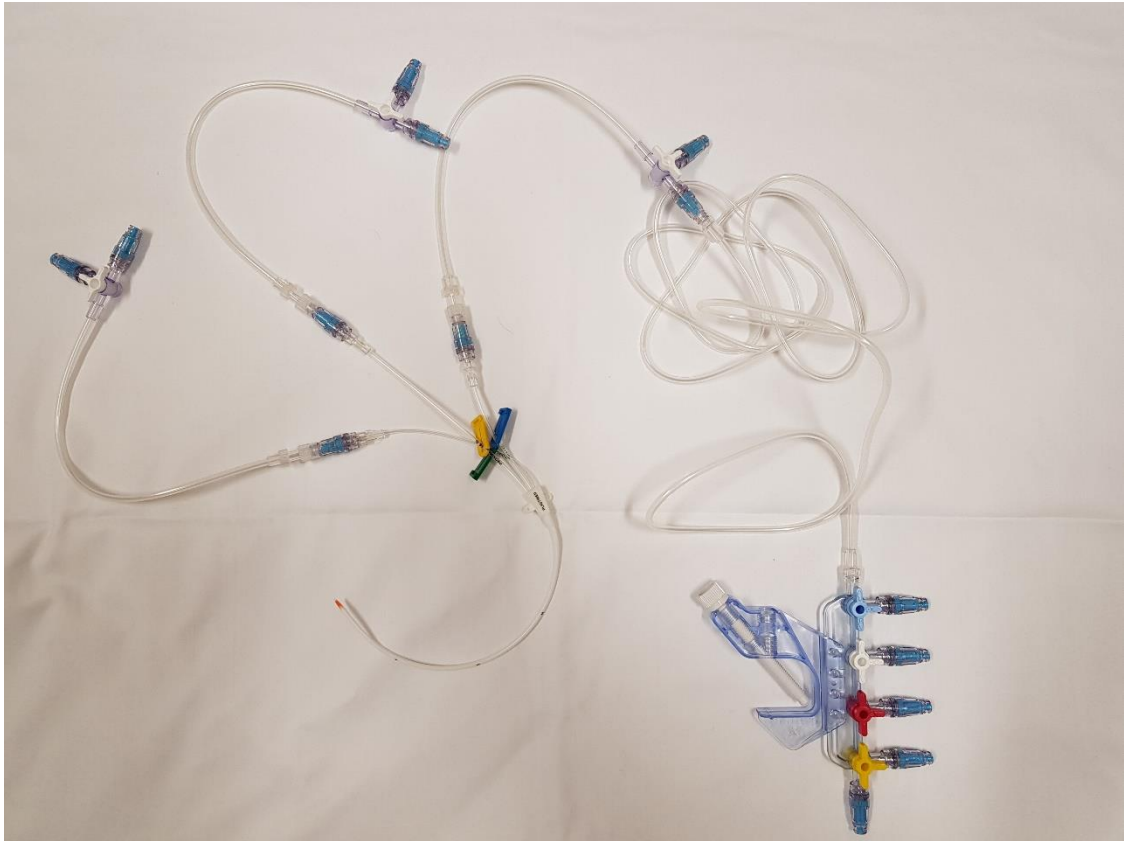


Figure 2

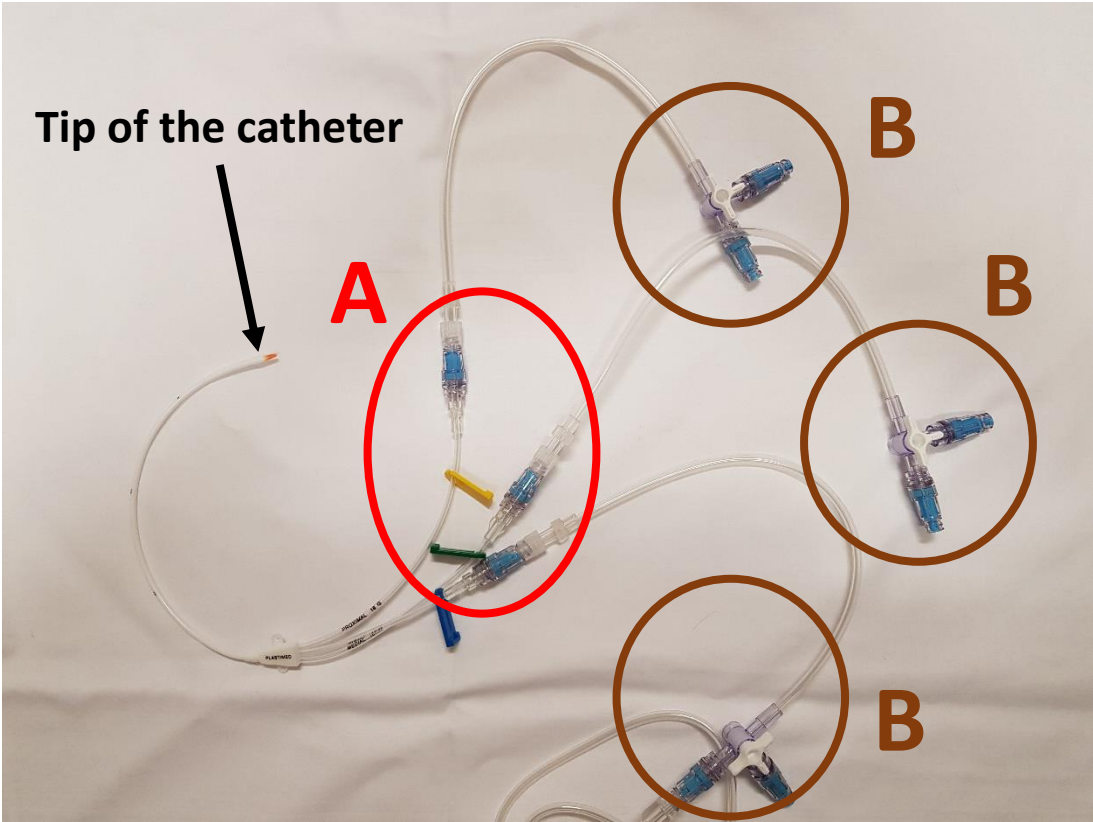
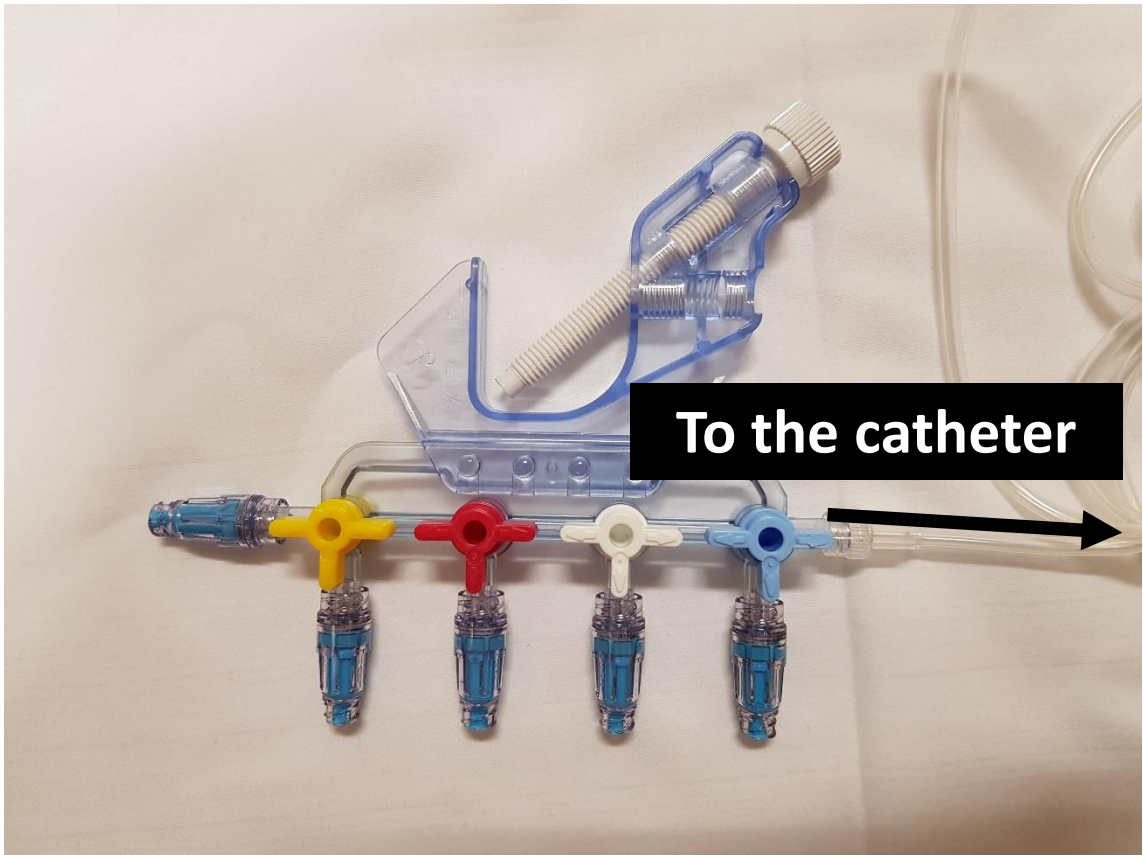


Figure 3

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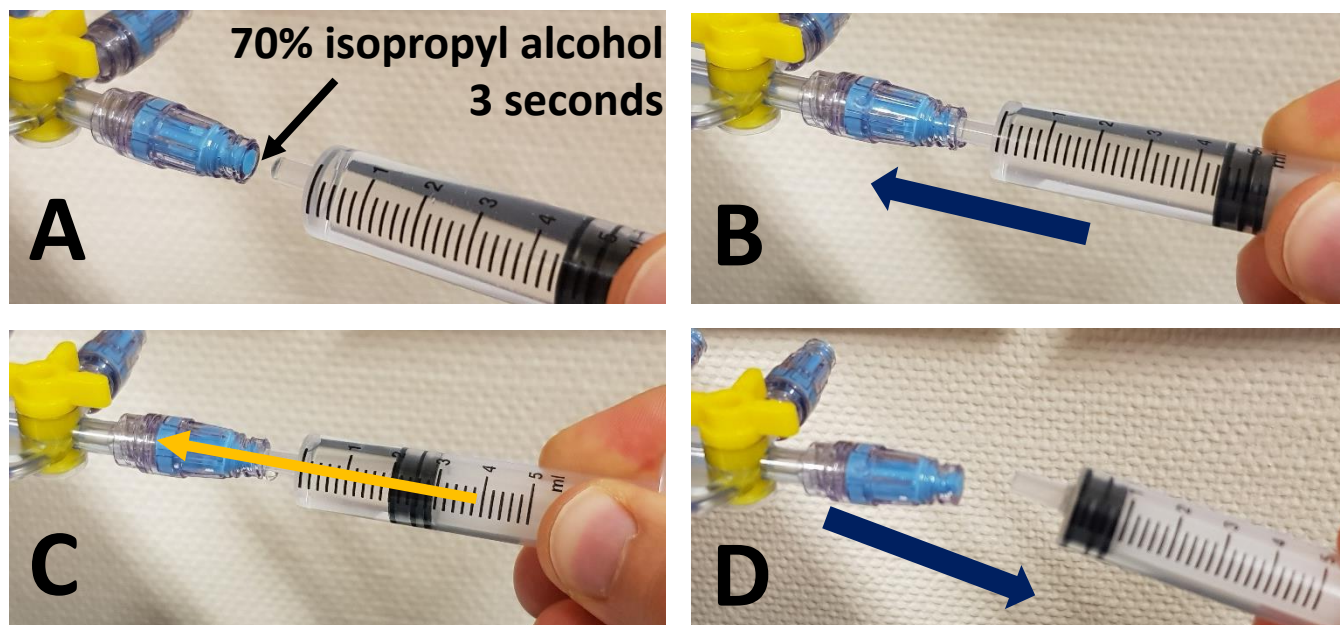


Figure 4: Steps of injection through a connector.

A. Disinfect the surface of the connector for 3 seconds with 70% isopropyl alcohol. Insert the tip of the syringe or infuser through the connector.

C. Inject or infuse the medication

D. Remove the syringe or infuser

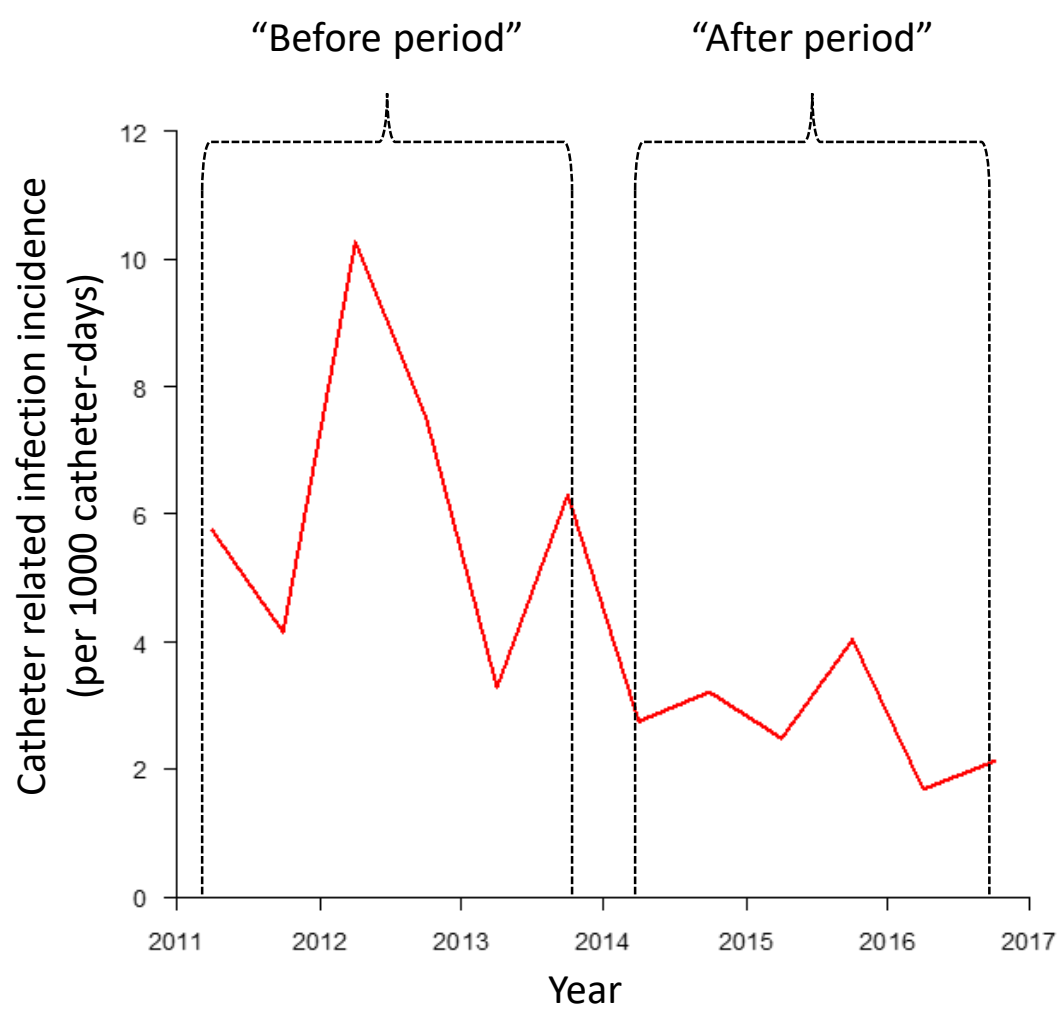


Figure 5: Evolution of the catheter related infection incidence before and after the use of connectors (figure taken from Clavier *et al.*¹⁰).

Name of Material/ Equipment	Company	Catalog Number	Comments/Description
BD MaxZero™ needle-free connector	Becton Dickinson	MZ1000-07	we present the installation of the connector with MaxZero but thi
4-port manifold with PE/PVC extension	Cair-LGL	RPB4310A	
PE/PVC extension line with 3-way stopcock	Cair-LGL	PE3302M	
NaCl 0.9% 250 ml	Baxter	2B1322	
	BECTON		
BD Plastipak™ 50mL Luer-Lock Syringe	DICKINSON MEDICAL	613-3925	

is protocol is applicable with any positive displacement valve.



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Dear Dr Steindel,

We are glad to submit the revised version of our manuscript entitled “**A protocol to set up needle-free connector with positive displacement on central venous catheter in intensive care unit**”. The manuscript is revised by following the suggestion and comments of the reviewers (with a tracking of the modifications). We also submit a version of the video following your suggestions and comments and those of the reviewers.

Thank you for the attention you have given to our protocol and thank you to the reviewers for their accurate and relevant comments that have contributed to improve the quality of our work. We remain of course at your disposal (and/or at the disposal of reviewers) if any further clarification is required.

We would like to thank you again for taking this manuscript into consideration for publication in *JoVE*,

Sincerely yours,

Dr Thomas Clavier

Department of Anesthesiology and Critical Care

Rouen University Hospital, Rouen, France

Response to Editor and Reviewers

Editorial and production comments:

General:

- 1. Please take this opportunity to thoroughly proofread the manuscript to ensure that**
- 2. JoVE cannot publish manuscripts containing commercial language. This includes trademark symbols (™), registered symbols (®), and company names before an instrument or reagent. Please limit the use of commercial language from your manuscript and use generic terms instead. All commercial products should be sufficiently referenced in the Table of Materials and Reagents.**

For example: BD MaxZero

RESPONSE: As asked we suppressed all the references to commercial language in the manuscript.

Protocol:

- 1. For each step, please ensure you answer the “how” question, i.e., how is the step performed? Alternatively, add references to published material specifying how to perform the protocol action. If revisions cause a step to have more than 2-3 actions and 4 sentences per step, please split into separate steps or substeps.**

RESPONSE: Thanks you for this comment. The steps we describe involve basic technical knowledge of nurses and physicians (screwing a line on a catheter, purging an infusion line, etc.). For the most complex step (catheter placement) we referred to a JoVE publication. If particular points of the protocol need to be more explicit, do not hesitate to let us know.

Specific Protocol steps:

- 1. 4.1: Which alcohol-ethanol? Do you mean 90%? See also Figure 4 and the video**

RESPONSE: Thank you for this remark, our presentation was indeed confusing. We switched “alcohol” to “isopropyl alcohol” and after a reviewer suggestion we switched to 70% alcohol.

Results:

- 1. Please include at least one figure or table (including in the video) demonstrating typical outcomes and/or effectiveness of this procedure. These can be from other works; if so, please cite them appropriately in the legend and obtain permission from the journal they were originally published in.**

RESPONSE: This remark is indeed relevant, thank you very much. As requested, we have reproduced a figure from a previous study on the subject that we published to illustrate the effect of our protocol.

Table of Materials:

1. Please ensure the Table of Materials has information on all materials and equipment used, especially those mentioned in the Protocol.

RESPONSE: We added the information about NaCl 0.9% and syringe that we used.

Video Content:

1. 0:09: 'mannequin', not 'manikin'.

2. 0:12 - It should be "venous", instead of "venus".

RESPONSE: Yes, absolutely, thank you for these remarks, we made the corrections.

Video Production:

1. The logos should be removed from the front title card. They can remain on the ending title card.

RESPONSE: As asked we removed them.

2. 0:00-0:15, 9:40-9:50 - There is a black border on the right side of the frame. The white background should fill the entire frame.

RESPONSE: We corrected this technical problem

3. 0:10 - The logos should be removed from this title card. The wording of the text may need to be changed because of this.

4. 0:16-9:38 - The logo bug in the top right of the video should be removed.

RESPONSE: As asked we removed the logos.

5. 1:33, 1:54, 2:40, 3:21, 5:10, 5:42, 5:49, 5:56, 6:29, 6:43, 6:49, 6:57, 7:12, 7:42, 7:52, 8:31- The edits here are jump cuts, which tend to have a jarring effect on the viewer. They should be smoothed out with crossfades instead.

RESPONSE: We edited the video to replace jump cuts with crossfades.

6. 1:37-1:54 - There is a lot of time where the demonstrator is just waiting on screen. Some of this wait time could be edited out and crossfades inserted to help this step move more quickly.

RESPONSE: We edited the video to shorten this sequence.

7. 4:17-5:09 - This step plays out in real time over mostly silence. If it is necessary to show this entire step in real time, narration should be added that further explains some of the details of this procedure as it is happening. If it is not necessary, this step should be edited for length. Perhaps it is only necessary to show the purging of one of the four connectors.

RESPONSE/ We edited the video to shorten this sequence (with only one purge).

8. Chapter title cards need to be inserted, include one that reads "Conclusion" at 8:51. This is for the chaptering of the video that will be done on our website upon publication, and will help viewers navigate through the content.

RESPONSE: As asked, we inserted title cards in the video.

9. There is no representative results section. There is some discussion of results in the concluding statement, but no visuals for them.

RESPONSE: This protocol was submitted to the journal at the request of a JoVE editor after we had already published an article on the effect of these connectors on catheter-related infections. The objective of the submission to JoVE was to show the protocol we had used but it did not seem to us scientifically deontological to copy the results we have already published and which now belong to another journal. That is why we refer to our previous publication in the text. However, we added a figure at the end of the video to add a visual information.

10. 9:52 - Social media logos should be omitted, as we cannot include corporate branding in published articles.

RESPONSE: As asked we removed them.

Reviewers' comments:

Reviewer #1:

Manuscript Summary:

A very simple protocol regarding an important clinical ICU support that can help to standardize the procedure

RESPONSE: Thank you very much for your feedback on our work and for the time you spent reviewing it.

Reviewer #2:

Manuscript Summary:

The authors describe a protocol to install needleless connectors on an infusion system attached to a central venous line, a routine procedure in intensive care units.

Thank you very much for your feedback on our work and for the time you spent reviewing it.

Major Concerns:

1) Although novelty is not a prerequisite for publication, this protocol describes a routine procedure that is currently performed in many ICUs in industrialized countries. I agree with the authors that this procedure is not performed according to a national or international standardized protocol. However, the authors fail to show superiority of their protocol compared to other alternative protocols. They don't present any data concerning the incidence of bacteraemia, central line infections and venous thrombosis in their patient population and thus fail to prove the efficacy of the protocol even in comparison to a historical control group.

RESPONSE: Thank you for these comment that encourage us to better present our objectives. This protocol was submitted to the journal at the request of a JoVE editor after we had already published an article on the effect of these connectors on catheter-related infections. The objective of the submission to JoVE was to show the protocol we had used but it did not seem to us scientifically deontological to copy the results we have already published and which now belong to another journal. That is why we refer to our previous publication in the text. However, we added a paragraph in the result part to summarize our previous results and we added a figure for visual information (Figure 5).

2) The authors recommend to attach a needleless connector proximal at the central venous line as well as at each socket of the 3-way-stopcock and additionally at each socket of the infusion manifold. By doing so, they end up with up to 3 serially installed needleless connectors. In the setting, what is the exact function of the proximal and middle connector?

RESPONSE: Maintaining the connectors in place keeps the infusion system closed, sterile mounted and minimizes the risk of bacterial contamination. Placing several connectors in a row allows the system to be kept closed after unscrewing regardless of where the infusion line is unscrewed. This also allows, due to the positive pressure that is kept, to leave a line uninfused wherever the line has been unscrewed. This makes manipulations easier and a more convenient use of the catheter for nurses.

3) In the results section, the authors claim that: "Maintaining the connectors in place keeps the infusion system closed, sterile mounted and minimizes the risk of bacterial contamination" but do not show any data to support this assumption.

RESPONSE: Thank you for these comments, which lead us to better express our point of view. We added a reference to our previous work and a figure to illustrate our point. We also cited other references on the beneficial impact of a closed system on catheter infections.

4) In the representative results section, no representative results are shown.

RESPONSE: Thank you for this comment. As previously said in response to your first comment, this protocol was submitted to the journal at the request of a JoVE editor after we had already published an article on the effect of these connectors on catheter-related infections. The objective of the submission to JoVE was to show the protocol but it was clearly stated with this editor that we could not duplicate our results (which belong to another journal). However, we added a paragraph in the result part to summarize our previous results and we added a figure to add a visual information (Figure 5).

5) In the discussion section, the authors claim that "It is also possible that these connectors reduce the risk of deep vein thrombosis¹¹". However, reference 11 reports on the influence of needleless connectors on thrombotic catheter occlusion and not on deep venous thrombosis and thus does not support the statement of the authors of the present manuscript.

RESPONSE: Yes, absolutely, thank you for that remark. This mistake, related to a translation problem, has been rectified. The sense of the original sentence was that these connectors decrease catheter occlusions (but they of course have no impact on venous occlusion).

Minor Concerns:

1) The authors recommend disinfecting the connector for 10 seconds with 90° alcohol. The manufacturer of the protocol recommends 3 seconds of disinfection with an alcohol-based disinfectant. How do the authors explain the superiority of their protocol compared to the recommendation of the manufacturer?

RESPONSE: This protocol was set up with the help of the manufacturer 7 years ago and their referent nurse suggested a duration of 10 seconds with 90% alcohol at that time (duration that remained in our protocol) but we have no arguments to affirm that 10 seconds of disinfection is better than 3 seconds. As things have evolved and according to your smart suggestion, we modified the protocol to set the disinfection time to 3 seconds. We also switched “90% alcohol” to “70% isopropyl alcohol” as it has also been included in the latest manufacturer's recommendations.

Reviewer #3:

I commend the authors on your manuscript and study of needleless connectors. However, I recommend attention to specific areas to add credibility to your work.

Thank you very much for your feedback on our work and for the time you spent reviewing it.

Manuscript Summary:

1. Your focus on a positive pressure needleless connector (NC) without providing a description of this product mechanism or comparison with other needleless connectors is deficient. Please add more information on needleless connector types (see Jarvis or Casey).

RESPONSE: This remark is indeed relevant, thank you very much. We added some sentences and references to describe NC mechanisms and to compare positive pressure NC with other needleless connectors.

2. Your frequent mention of MaxZero™ and the advantages of positive pressure NC come across as a sales pitch and a how to on placing this specific NC on tubing. Please change and add generic terms and include comparisons with other NC such as negative, neutral and anti-reflux.

RESPONSE: Thank you very much for this suggestion that we perfectly understand. As asked we suppressed all the references to commercial language in the manuscript. As specified in the manuscript, BD had no role in this work.

3. The protocol emphasizes importance of a standardized process without validation of steps or components. With the inclusion of extension tubing, stopcocks and manifolds there are risk concerns related to each of these add on devices that are not addressed. Please expand your discussion and include explanation of why you chose the add on components. Also include issues of contamination risk associated with stopcocks and manifolds.

RESPONSE: Thank you for this suggestion which allows us to better describe our protocol. We added an entire paragraph in the discussion to clarify these aspects of our protocol.

Major Concerns:

Bias, incomplete support for conclusions and lack of comparison with other products. Failure to report complications other than rapid flow concerns. Research on risk related to stopcocks and manifolds are not mentioned. Discussion is missing some vital points, see below. Failure to address other issues related to NC such as reflux and catheter occlusion.

RESPONSE: Thank you for these comment that encourage us to better present our objectives. This protocol was submitted to the journal at the request of a JoVE editor after we had already published an article on the effect of these connectors on catheter-related infections. The objective of the submission to JoVE was to show the protocol we had used but it did not seem to us scientifically deontological to copy the results we have already published and which now belong to another journal. That is why we refer to our previous publication in the text. The purpose of the present article was not to make a comparison with other connector devices (there is already several work on the subject) but to describe our experience with a positive pressure connector. However, we added a paragraph in the result part to summarize our previous results and we added a figure to add a visual information (Figure 5).

DISCUSSION:

1. Advantages of closed system not adequately reported or included with supporting evidence.

RESPONSE: Yes, absolutely, thank you for that remark. We added a sentence concerning the beneficial impact of closed systems.

2. Vein guard not defined.

RESPONSE: We have modified this sentence to make it easier to understand and deleted the term “Vein guard”.

3. The term MaxZero™ was overused and should be omitted and replaced with positive pressure needleless connector (PPNC) or something generic.

RESPONSE: Thank you for this suggestion, we modified the text as asked.

4. The complications or lack thereof reported is of minimal importance in light of the failure to report all or any other complications related to the function of the device.

RESPONSE: We are sorry to observe that we do not fully understand this comment. We clearly discuss the infectious risk associated with these connectors in the introduction and discuss the impact of these connectors on infusion rate as reported in some studies. We also talk about the importance of training nurses that use this device to avoid misuse. If you want us to detail other complications, do not hesitate to specify them and we will of course add them on the manuscript.

4. Asepsis with installation was briefly mentioned, but, while included in the video as a sterile process, the sterile or completely aseptic application every 7 days at the bedside was ignored. Aseptic non touch ANTT could be mentioned in association with the nursing education.

RESPONSE: Thank you for this suggestion which improves the discussion section. We add two sentences on the ANTT.

5. The impact of connectors on complications related to central venous catheterization is poorly understood. - not true, issues of infection and occlusion are directly related to NC function and disinfection. Modify this conclusion and use evidence to support statements.

RESPONSE: Thank you for these comments, which lead us to better express our mind. We suppressed this sentence and we cite the references concerning catheter infection or occlusion in this paragraph.

6. In addition, regular examination of the connectors for contamination is essential to be able to rinse or change the implicated connectors and avoid bacterial growth. Due to the technical aspect of this kind of connector, nurses must be trained before using these connectors in everyday practice. -- Please read Ferroni and Guiffant on the impact of pulsatile flushing for catheters. Include this issue in your discussion on rinsing/flushing.

RESPONSE: As asked we cited this article in our manuscript.

7. It is also possible that these connectors reduce the risk of deep vein thrombosis^{11 167}. - I question this conclusion. Please add more statements to support this or omit.

RESPONSE: Yes, thank you for that remark that point one error in the text. This mistake related to a translation problem has been rectified. The sense of the original sentence was that these connectors decrease catheter occlusions (but they of course have no impact on venous occlusion).

8. Although the potential beneficial effects have not been clearly demonstrated, data in the literature support the safe and prolonged use of these devices. - I question the first part of this sentence since there is quite a bit of literature on beneficial effects of NC. Please modify this sentence and add evidence and more content to support your statements.

RESPONSE: We have probably been too cautious in our interpretation of recent literature on these devices, thank you to raise this point. We modified this part of the discussion and cited more references to support our statement on the beneficial impact of NC.

9. However, different units may use different methods to mount connectors on infusion lines and most studies do not accurately describe the method used to install connectors on catheters. It seems appropriate that studies on connectors should rigorously report their installation protocol. --These are strange conclusions since NC are used on almost all intravenous devices in the United States by simply luer screwing the NC on the catheter hub without any additional extensions or supplies. Your use of the term "accurately" does not seem to apply since you have no validation of your procedure or steps. Please change these sentence and support your conclusions.

RESPONSE: As asked we modified this sentence to moderate our point of view. As you said, practices may vary from one country to another and in Europe the use of several infusion lines in addition to the NC is quite frequent. In our opinion, it costs nothing to write in an article studying NC the type of set-up that is used (even if it is very simple) and this contributes to the rigour of the scientific report. We therefore believe that our remark remains relevant.

Minor Concerns:

I recognize this was meant to be a short report of a protocol this facility is using, but without criteria to measure impact and outcomes the protocol has little credibility.

RESPONSE: As previously said in response one of your previous comment, this protocol was submitted to the journal at the request of a JoVE editor after we had already published an article on the effect of these connectors on catheter-related infections. The objective of the submission to JoVE was to show the protocol but it was clearly stated with this editor that we could not duplicate our results (which belong to another journal). However, we added a paragraph in the result part to summarize our previous results and we added a figure to add a visual information (Figure 5).

Dear Dr Steindel,

We are glad to submit the revised version of our manuscript entitled “**A protocol to set up needle-free connector with positive displacement on central venous catheter in intensive care unit**”. The manuscript is revised by following your last suggestions. We also submit a version of the video following your suggestions and comments.

We remain of course at your disposal (and/or at the disposal of reviewers) if any further clarification is required.

We would like to thank you again for taking this manuscript into consideration for publication in *JoVE*,

Sincerely yours,

Dr Thomas Clavier

Department of Anesthesiology and Critical Care

Rouen University Hospital, Rouen, France

Response to Editor

1. 6:42-6:59 - The audio quality of this sentence of narration is noticeably different from the narration that surrounds it. This should be rerecorded so that it sounds similar to the rest of the narration. Also, it should say "...for three seconds..." instead of "...during three seconds..."

Answer: We have made a new audio recording of this sequence in our studio

2. There should be a separate representative results section (with title card) in the video, between the protocol and discussion.

Answer: We added a result part to the video with a figure and audio comments on the impact that the implementation of these connectors has had in our ICU.

3. Although the main focus of this should indeed be the procedure, as two reviewers have concerns about effectiveness, other readers/viewers may have the same concerns. It may be best to include more evidence in that regard, e.g., incidence of complications.

Answer: We understand the reviewers' comments on this point. That is why we insisted in our discussion on the fact that we had not encountered any complications related to the use of this protocol: no difficulty in infusing medication, no difficulties in vascular filling, no peaks of infection, etc. Figure 5 shows the effectiveness that this protocol has had in our department. In the results section, we have added data from our previous work to clarify the impact of this protocol on our patients.

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Publication new article is in	Journal of visual experiment (JoVE)
Publisher of the new article	MyJove Corp

Author of new article	Thomas Clavier
Expected publication date	May 2019
Estimated size of new article (number of pages)	6
Requestor Location	Thomas Clavier Inserm U982, Place Emile Blondel Mont-Saint,-Aignan, 76000 France Attn: Thomas Clavier
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