

Dialysis Professional

“Ready, Set, Go” The Steps to Catheter Freedom Weeks 2-3: Graft Healing & Readiness Check



- Perform graft healing check at each treatment or when patient reports a change.
 - Reinforce to patient the importance of daily graft checks.
 - Listen to the patient.

Look



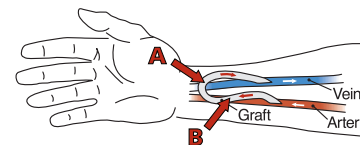
Listen



Feel



Augmentation Test



Perform once.
If normal, no need to repeat.

Were there any abnormal findings during the graft healing and readiness check?

No

Document that there were no abnormal findings.

Yes

Document findings and refer to expert clinician.

Continued...

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Look

You **can see the graft** and tell if it is a straight or looped graft.

The cannulation segment is long enough to use two needles placed at least two inches apart.

The skin over the graft is **all one color** and **looks like the skin around it**.



You **cannot** see the graft.

The arm is **bruised** and/or the hand is **not the normal color**.

There is **redness, swelling** or **drainage**.

Listen

When you listen to the graft with a stethoscope, You hear the bruit along the length of the graft.

The bruit **sounds like a “whoosh,”** or for some, like a **drum beat**.



There is **no sound**, or the bruit is **not as loud** as the last time it was checked.

Sound is **different** than what a normal bruit should sound like.

Feel

You **can feel** the graft.



You **cannot** feel the graft.

Thrill is a vibration or buzz that can be felt most prominently where the graft joins the artery and where it joins the vein.

You **can feel the thrill**.

Pulse: A slight beating that feels like a heartbeat. When you place your fingers lightly on the graft, they move slightly.

You **cannot** feel the thrill or it is **weaker** than the last time it was checked.

Pulsatile: The beat is **stronger** than a normal pulse. Fingers placed lightly on the graft **rise and fall with each beat**.

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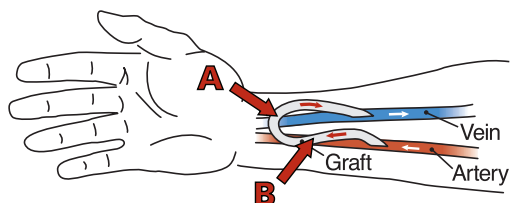


Augmentation Test

If normal at week 2 or 3, it does not need to be repeated.

Curved Graft

The arrows show you where to place your fingers. Place your fingers at point A on the graft, feel the pulse, and press down until no blood is flowing through the graft. Keep your finger on the graft, place your other finger at point B to feel the pulse near the connection of the graft to the artery.



Straight Graft

Place your fingers on the out-going venous part of the graft, feel the pulse, and press down until no blood is flowing through the graft. Keep your finger on the venous part of the graft and feel for the pulse near the arterial connection to the graft.

Pulse is “strong and bounding” and may cause your finger to rise and fall with each beat.

Pulse **does not** become more forceful or “strong and bounding.”



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