

## **Catheter Related Infections; Infectious Diseases Expert Witness**

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### **Background:**

A catheter is a flexible tube that is inserted into the body with the purpose of withdrawal of fluids from (or introduction of fluids or a device into) a body cavity. Catheters are often a routine part of medical care in 2022. There are many different types of catheters; some common examples include: urinary catheters (to drain the bladder), intravascular catheters (for delivery of medications intravenously), and dialysis catheters (for administration of hemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis).

### **Clinical Significance:**

Despite often being a necessary part of patient care, catheter-related complications, such as infection, occur routinely, occasionally leading to devastating consequences for the patient. For example, it is estimated that more than 5 million central venous catheters (CVCs) are inserted into patients every year in the US, and the frequency of CVC associated bloodstream infections (also called central line associated bloodstream infection or CLABSI) is estimated at 0.5 - 10 infections per 1000 catheter days. The mortality ranges from 12-40% and up to 70% of these infections may be preventable. Another common type of catheter related infection is a catheter associated urinary tract infection (CAUTI), which is the most common type of hospital acquired infection (HAI), accounting for more than 30% of infections reported by acute care hospitals. CAUTI are associated with increased patient morbidity, mortality, cost and length of stay.

### **Diagnosis and Management:**

Diagnosis and management of catheter related infections varies, depending on the catheter type, and the clinical scenario. For CLABSI, CAUTI and infections related to dialysis catheters, published guidelines exist that describe best practices for diagnosis and management, including recommendations for antimicrobial therapy and whether or not the catheter may remain in place or should be removed. In general, it is best practice to remove a catheter that is no longer needed as soon as possible.

### **Conclusions:**

Catheter-related infections are an unfortunate complication of catheter placement and continue to occur to patients nationwide. A catheter-related infection Expert Witness

may be helpful in the evaluation of the care of a patient with suspected or confirmed catheter-related infection.

## References

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