

A Self Cannulator's Guide To Using The Xtra-Med Buttonhole Fistula Needle In Line With The British Renal Society Recommendations For Buttonhole Cannulation

1. Ensure you wash your hands and fistula limb thoroughly.
2. Clean the buttonhole sites using the disinfectant solution recommended by your hospital. Ensure you follow the manufacturers specific instructions for **cleaning time** and **drying time**. This is essential to allow the cleaning solution to do its job properly. It is a good idea to time yourself during the cleaning step and also time the drying step to make sure you adhere to the instructions.
3. Remove the sterile scab pick from the first needle cover by sliding it upwards.
4. Very carefully remove the scab from your first buttonhole site by utilising the bevel of the pick to get underneath the edge of the scab and remove it in one piece. Avoid invasive digging or scraping of the buttonhole site to protect it from damage which could cause problems in the future.
5. Remove the sterile pick from the second needle and repeat step 5 on your second buttonhole site.
6. Clean the buttonhole sites for a second time, now that both scabs are removed using the disinfectant solution recommended by your hospital. Again, ensure you follow the manufacturer specific instructions for **cleaning time** and **drying time**. This is essential to allow the cleaning solution to do its job properly this second time too. It is a good idea to time yourself again during this second cleaning step and also time the drying step to make sure you adhere to the instructions.
7. Double check that your arm and hand of your fistula limb are in exactly the same position as the last time cannulation took place.
8. Remove the protective cover from the first buttonhole needle and hold the needle by the tubing just behind the wings.
9. Gently glide the needle into the buttonhole track, avoiding excessive force. Feel how the needle is travelling down your buttonhole track, it should feel that it is travelling smoothly. If you feel the glide is not as it should be, check your hand and arm position, a small adjustment can often set the track in the correct position and allow the needle to glide in. If gliding this first needle in is not successful, take a second new buttonhole needle and attempt to glide it into the track, it is important to avoid multiple attempts with the same needle as this could introduce infection into your buttonhole track. Make sure that you do not push the buttonhole needle in too far. If you push the needle in all the way up to the needle neck, you can stretch and damage the mouth of your buttonhole track. As a guide you should stop pushing the needle when there is still 1 - 2mm of the steel shaft of the needle visible to you.
10. Do not rotate the needle.
11. Secure the needle in place following the taping protocol your hospital has advised. Be careful not to alter the needle position during this step.
12. Repeat steps 9—12 for your second buttonhole site.