



ARTERIAL LINE

An arterial (ART) line is a hollow plastic tube (much like an IV catheter). A doctor places the line in the patient's wrist, elbow, or groin. In newborns it may be placed in the bell button area of the abdomen.

What Is It For?

An ART line is attached to a monitor. It allows the nurses and doctors to observe the patient's blood pressure continuously. The nurses will be able to draw most blood for lab tests from the ART line -- this means the patient will not need to be stuck with a needle repeatedly.

Special Concerns

The ART line is in an artery. Should it become disconnected from the tubing or pulled out accidentally, the patient could lose a large amount of blood very quickly. If you see blood "backing up" in the ART line or the patient pulling on the ART line, please notify the nurse immediately. The arterial line site will be checked frequently by the nurses for infection or irritation.

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