Central venous catheters up infection risk in cancer patients
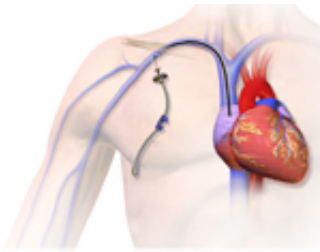
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Image courtesy of Blausen Medical

(HealthDay)—Long-term central venous catheters (CVCs) are associated with an increased risk of infection in older adults with cancer, according to research published online June 30 in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*.

Allison Lipitz-Snyderman, Ph.D., of the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York City, and colleagues analyzed data from 2005 to 2007 for patients diagnosed with invasive or noninvasive breast cancer; invasive colorectal, head and neck, lung, or pancreatic cancer; or non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. All patients were older than 65 years. The authors sought to assess the effect of long-term CVC use on infection risk.

The researchers found that CVC use was associated with significantly increased risk of infection among older patients with cancer. During

CVC exposure, increased risk of infection was observed among patients with breast cancer (adjusted hazard ratio [aHR], 6.19; 95 percent confidence interval [CI], 5.42 to 7.07) or pancreatic cancer (aHR, 2.93; 95 percent CI, 2.58 to 3.33). The same associations were found after adjusting for propensity to receive a CVC and limiting the cohort to only include individuals at high risk of infections.

"Careful assessment of the need for long-term CVCs and targeted strategies for reducing infections are critical to improving cancer care quality," the authors write.

 More information: Abstract
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