

# Buttonhole Technique

## For native AV fistulas only:

- Fewer missed sticks, infiltrations, and hematomas
- Allows patients to self-cannulate
- Good wound healers will form a tunnel in approximately 8-10 days; poor wound healers in approximately 12-14 days



## Consistency creates successful buttonhole sites:

- The same angle of insertion with every cannulation
- Angle determined by depth of the fistula
- The same cannulator until the tunnels form
- Using a tourniquet on all AV fistulas all the time
- Pull skin taut to anchor fistula
- Transitioning to blunt needles prevents cutting and/or damaging the tunnel

## Prevent infection:

- Scab removal is critical in preventing infection
  - ✓ Don't stick through scab, remove completely
  - ✓ Don't let patients pick off with fingernail
  - ✓ Don't flip off with the needle tip, then insert
- Follow skin preparation protocols
  - ✓ Skin contact time is key
  - ✓ Follow the manufacturer's recommendation
- Consider 2-Step Skin Prep Protocol

# Buttonhole References

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