“Ready, Set, Go” The Steps to Catheter Freedom
Week 4: Graft Healing & Readiness Check

- Perform graft healing check at each treatment or when patient reports a change.
  - Reinforce to patient the importance of daily graft checks.
  - Listen to the patient.

**Look**
**Listen**
**Feel**

**Augmentation Test**
(Optional)

Were there any abnormal findings during the graft healing and readiness check?

- **No**
  - Document that there were no abnormal findings.

- **Yes**
  - Document findings and refer to expert clinician.

Continued...
Dialysis Professional

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Week 4: Graft Healing & Readiness Check

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Look</th>
<th>Stop</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The hand of the affected arm <strong>looks the same</strong> as it did before surgery.</td>
<td>The arm is <strong>bruised</strong> and/or the hand is <strong>not the normal color</strong>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The skin over the graft is <strong>all one color</strong> and looks like the skin around it.</td>
<td>There is <strong>redness, swelling, or drainage</strong>.</td>
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<td>When you listen to the graft with a stethoscope, you hear the bruit along the length of the graft.</td>
<td>There is <strong>no sound</strong>, or the bruit is <strong>not as loud</strong> as the last time it was checked.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The bruit <strong>sounds like a “whoosh,” or for some, like a drum beat.</strong></td>
<td>Sound is <strong>different</strong> than what a normal bruit should sound like.</td>
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<td><strong>Threat</strong> is a vibration or buzz that can be felt most prominently where the graft joins the artery and where it joins the vein.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

- **You can feel the thrill.**
- **Pulse:** A slight beating that feels like a heartbeat. When you place your fingers lightly on the graft, they move slightly.
- **You cannot feel the thrill or it is weaker than the last time it was checked.**
- **Pulsatile:** The beat is **stronger** than a normal pulse. Fingers placed lightly on the graft rise and fall with each beat.

(Continued...)
Augmentation Test

Optional

Curved Graft
The arrows show you where to place your fingers. Place your fingers at point A on the graft, feel the pulse, and press down until no blood is flowing through the graft. Keep your finger on the graft, place your other finger at point B to feel the pulse near the connection of the graft to the artery.

Straight Graft
Place your fingers on the out-going venous part of the graft, feel the pulse, and press down until no blood is flowing through the graft. Keep your finger on the venous part of the graft and feel for the pulse near the arterial connection to the graft.

Pulse is “strong and bounding” and may cause your finger to rise and fall with each beat.

Pulse does not become more forceful or “strong and bounding.”