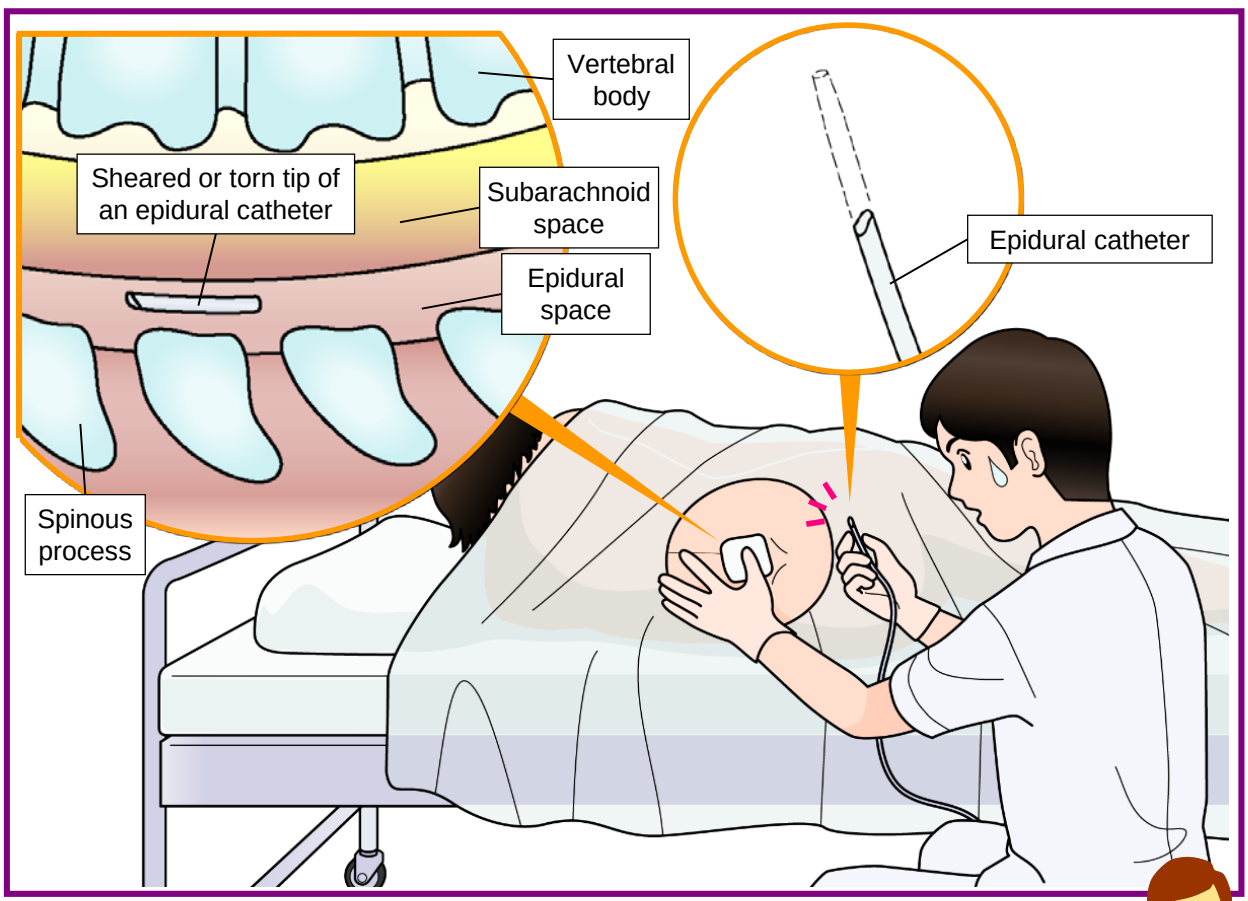
Medical Safety Information
Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Agency
No. 41 January 2014

Precautions in the Handling of Epidural Catheters

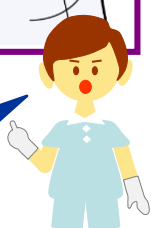
POINT Key points for safe use

(Case) When an epidural catheter for pain control was removed, the tip of the catheter was torn off and left in the patient body.

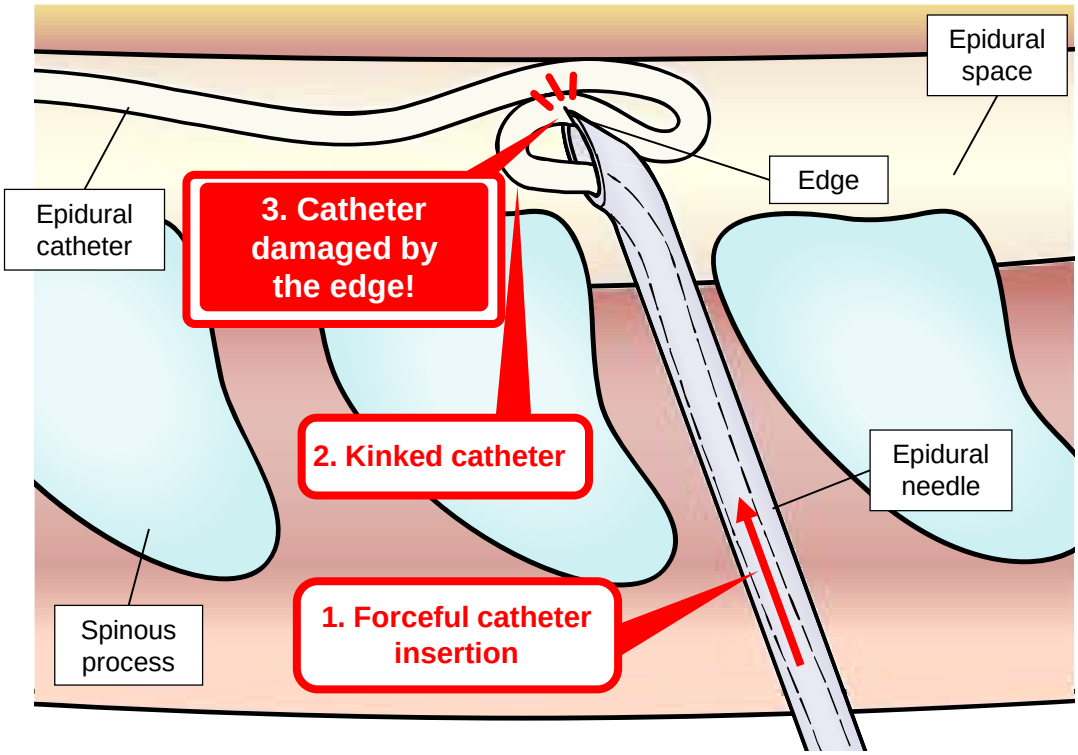
1 Precautions when handling epidural catheters



Epidural catheters which were damaged during insertion may be sheared or torn when the catheter was removed.



Mechanism of catheter damage (1)



Catheter damage

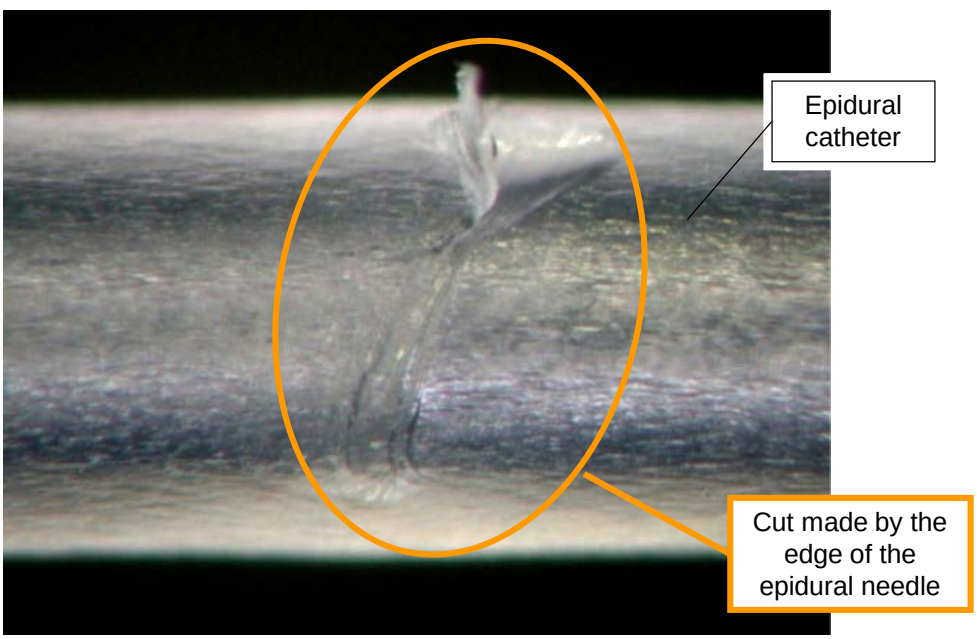
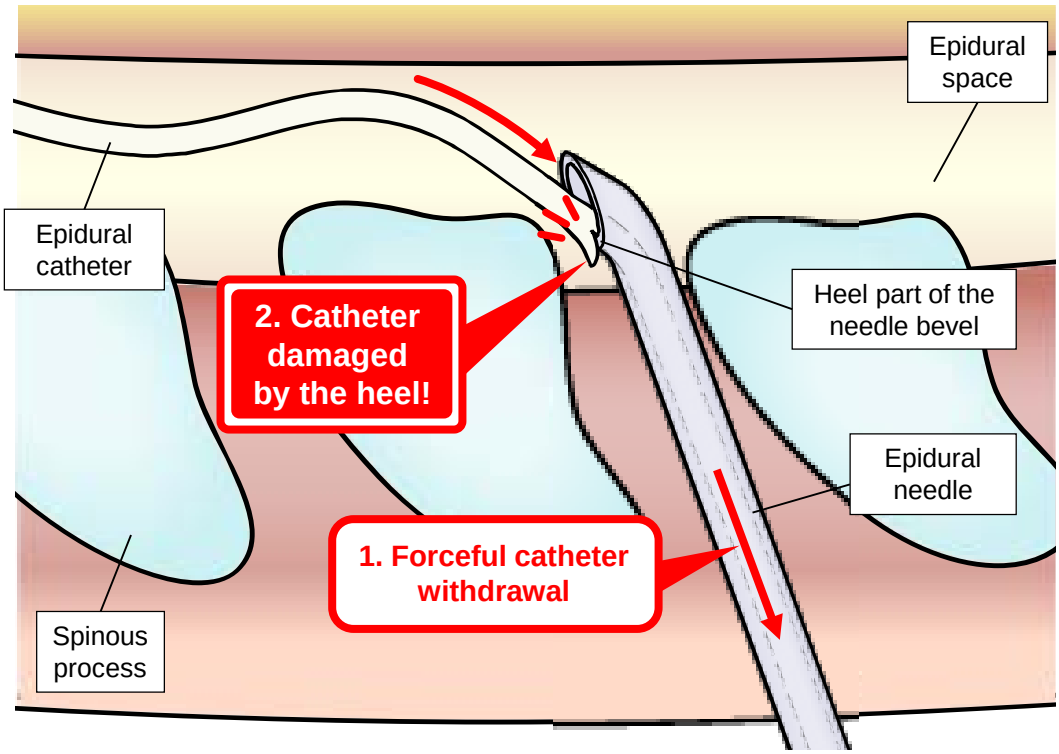


Photo by Hakko Co., Ltd.

Do not insert a catheter forcibly if resistance is felt.
The catheter may be damaged by the epidural needle.



Mechanism of catheter damage (2)



Catheter damage

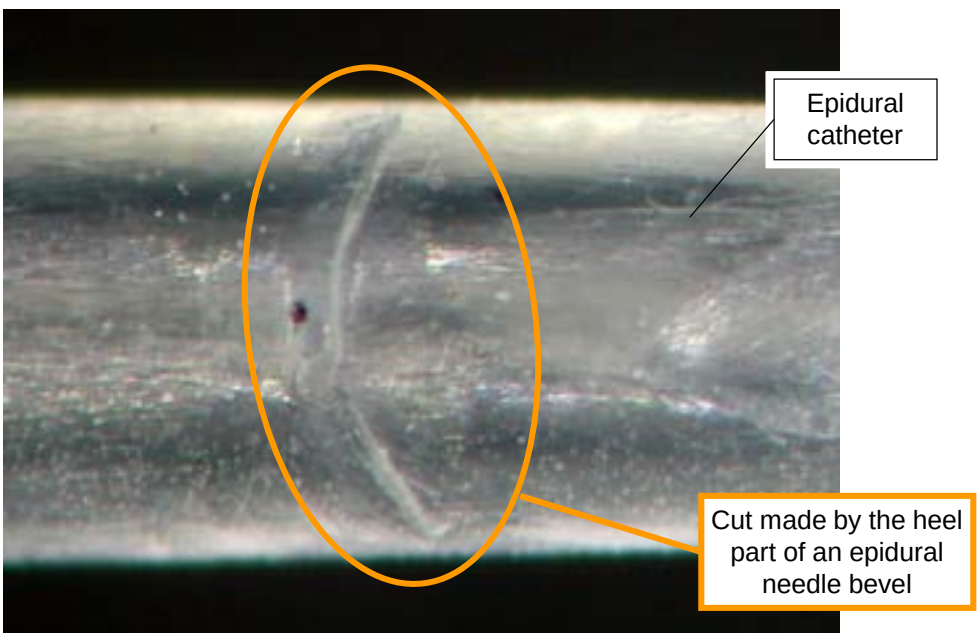


Photo by Hakko Co., Ltd.

Do not forcibly pull a catheter back during insertion.
The catheter may be damaged by the epidural needle.



Example of a sheared epidural catheter (cross-sectional view)

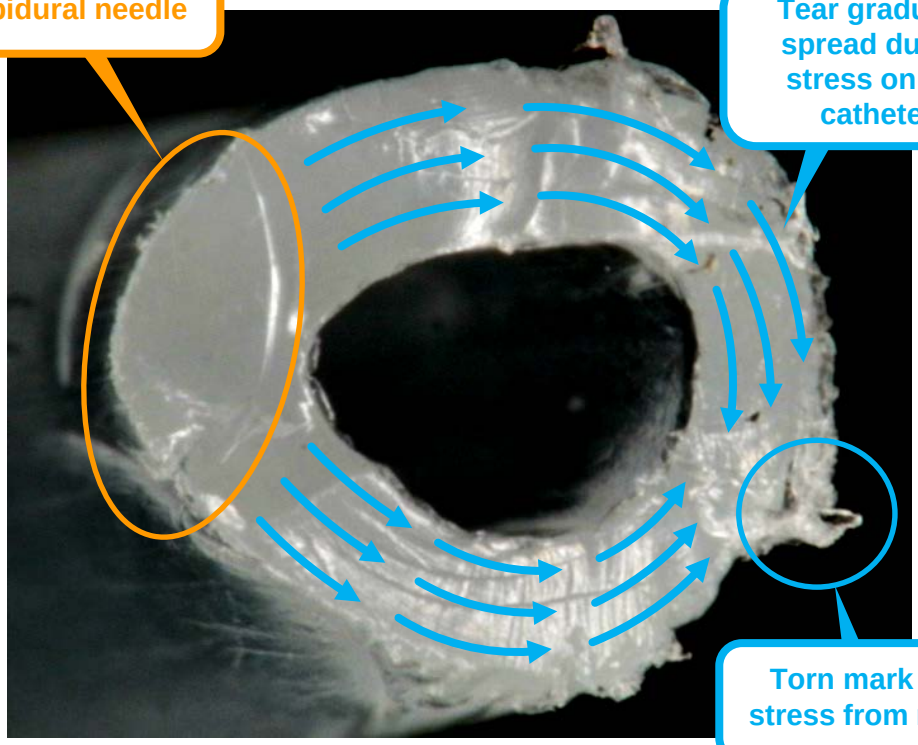
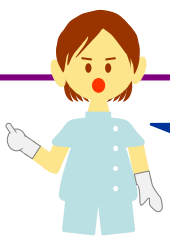


Photo by Hakko Co., Ltd.



A smooth cut made by the epidural needle can be seen on the damaged catheter as shown in the above photograph.
Catheters may be torn from the damaged area and completely sheared during removal.

About this information

* PMDA Medical Safety Information is issued by the Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Agency for the purpose of providing healthcare providers with clearer information from the perspective of promoting the safe use of pharmaceuticals and medical devices. The information presented here has been compiled, with the assistance of expert advice, from cases collected as Medical Accident Information Reports by the Japan Council for Quality Health Care, and collected as Adverse Drug Reaction and Malfunction Reports in accordance with the Pharmaceutical Affairs Law.

* We have tried to ensure the accuracy of this information at the time of its compilation but do not guarantee its accuracy in the future.

* This information is not intended to impose constraints on the discretion of healthcare professionals or to impose obligations and responsibility on them, but is provided as a support to promote the safe use of pharmaceuticals and medical devices by healthcare professionals.

Published by the Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Agency

Contact:
Medical Safety Information Group
E-mail: safety.info@pmda.go.jp
http://www.info.pmda.go.jp/