Preventing Tubing and Luer Misconnections
Tips for Health Care Providers

Health Care Providers
ACT to prevent tubing misconnections! To help reduce risk to patients, consider the following strategies, based on recommendations from The Joint Commission and ECRI Institute.

Assess equipment
• Assess and clearly label each device, including low-risk devices and high-risk catheters

Communicate
• Ensure good communication between health care staff during patient transfer
• Inform non-clinical staff, patients, families, and caregivers they must get help from clinical staff whenever there is a real or perceived need to connect or disconnect devices or tubing

Trace
• Trace a tube from the patient to the point of origin prior to connecting any new devices or replacing old ones
• Vigilantly check and recheck Luers to ensure proper connections prior to each use

Clinical Managers
Risk managers, nurse managers, clinical educators, etc. consider taking the following steps to help prevent misconnections:
• Tell clinicians, patients, and caregivers in home-based or ambulatory care settings when new devices are intended for use in the health care facility or home health agencies
• Emphasize the risk of tubing and catheter misconnections in orientation and training curricula

Health Care Facilities
ECRI Institute recommends creating a multidisciplinary task force—with staff from nursing, risk management, clinical engineering, and purchasing—to identify potential misconnections hazards and develop strategies for combating them. Consider the following actions to help prevent misconnections:
• During initial use, check new devices and equipment to identify potential misconnections and take immediate corrective actions, if needed
• Report adverse events and near misses, following your facility protocol
• Report any issues to the FDA through its MedWatch reporting system
• Health care personnel employed by facilities that are subject to FDA’s user facility reporting requirements should follow the reporting procedures established by their facilities