### Common veins used for IV cannulation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vein</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Cephalic Vein | Forms from a confluence of veins at the base of the thumb and passes upward along the radial (lateral) aspect of the forearm to enter the lateral part of the antecubital fossa. | - Readily receives a large cannula and is therefore a good site for blood administration.  
- Splinted by the forearm bones  
- Cannula is easily secured | - Can be more difficult to cannulate than the metacarpel veins.  
- May be confused with an aberrant radial artery. |
| Basilic Vein  | Forms from a confluence of veins on the postero-medial aspect of the wrist and passes upward slightly posterior to the ulnar (medial) border of the forearm but winds round over the ulnar to enter the medial aspect of the antecubital fossa. | - A large vein that is frequently overlooked in the hunt for veins.  
- Requires awkward positioning of the limb to gain access to the vein.  
- The vein tends to roll away when you attempt to cannulate it.  
- Sites prone to phlebitis.  
- Cannula port gets caught on sheets. | |
| Median Vein   | There may be more than one ‘median’ vein in the antecubital fossa. They are formed by the convergence and divergence of branches of the 3 forearm veins. | - Large veins and so they will readily accept a large cannula.  
- Do not "shut down" as quickly as the more peripheral veins.  
- **FIRST CHOICE IN THE EMERGENCY SITUATION.** | - Can be very positional due to elbow flexion/extension.  
- Can be very uncomfortable for the patient due to elbow flexion/extension.  
- Care must be taken not to cannulate the brachial artery. |
| Metacarpal Veins | Easy to see and palpate veins.  
- Splinted by metacarpal bones  
- Allows use of more proximal veins in the same limb should the cannula need to be re-sited.  
- Cannula is easily accessible in the theatre environment. | - Active patients may dislodge easily.  
- Dressing may be compromised by handwashing.  
- May be more difficult if the skin is thin and friable.  
- Flow can be affected by wrist flexion or extension i.e. A POSITIONAL VENFLON. | |