

Urgent Community Response Team & Hospital at Home Intravenous Fluids at Home

Information for Patients & Families

This leaflet will give you information about what to expect when receiving intravenous fluids in your own home via the Urgent Community Response or Hospital at Home teams. If you have further questions, please ask your healthcare team.

What are Intravenous (IV) fluids?

Intravenous (IV) fluids are given directly into a vein through a small plastic tube called a cannula. This system of giving fluids is commonly referred to as “a drip”. IV fluids will be used in situations when taking fluids by mouth is not possible or does not achieve fluid replacement quickly enough.

Who can have IV fluids at home?

You will be carefully assessed alongside your medical history and personal circumstances as not everyone will be able to receive IV fluids at home. For some people, admission to hospital is the best and safest option.

If IV fluid at home fails to treat the underlying problem effectively, you may still need to be treated in a hospital.

What is the benefit to having IV fluids at home?

We recognise many people prefer to receive treatment in their own home, where they feel safe, comfortable and supported. This service will help you to receive the care you need at home when possible.

How will the fluids be given?

A cannula will be inserted into a vein in your hand or arm, it feels very similar to the sensation of having blood taken. The cannula will then be secured with a dressing, to stop it moving around or falling out.

A bag of fluid will then be connected to the cannula and administered over approximately one hour. A member of the healthcare team will complete this procedure and stay with you throughout the infusion.

When the bag of fluids is empty, the team member will then disconnect the drip, but the cannula will remain in place until you have been assessed as unlikely to need further fluids.

Some individuals may only need 1 bag of fluid, whereas others may need fluids over a few days. When you no longer need IV fluids, the cannula will be removed.

How do I care for the cannula?

Having a cannula inserted into your vein, provides an easy entry point for bacteria (germs) to enter your body. For this reason, preventing infection is **VERY** important. Healthcare staff will use infection prevention methods when handling equipment and giving fluids.

Your main goals are:

- To keep the cannula safely in place
- To keep it dry
- To help prevent infection

To help prevent infection:

- You will need to avoid handling the cannula as much as possible.
- Ensure pets do not touch it.
- Keep the cannula clean and dry.
- Thoroughly clean your hands using soap and water or hand gel prior to touching the cannula or the dressing.

If you do have to touch the cannula e.g. while getting dressed, wash your hands thoroughly first, using soap and water or alcohol gel.

Please be very careful when putting on and taking off clothing, to avoid knocking or pulling the cannula out, causing discomfort, or accidentally loosening the dressing.

What should I do if the dressing becomes loose, or the cannula falls out?

If the cannula becomes dislodged, you may experience some bleeding from the vein. If this occurs, cover the area with a clean tissue and press firmly for 2-3 minutes until the bleeding has fully stopped, and notify your healthcare team.

A new cannula may need to be inserted at the next healthcare visit if fluids are to be continued.

Can I have a bath or shower when I have a cannula in place?

Yes, you can, but you must be careful to keep the cannula and dressing dry. It **MUST** stay out of the water. The area can be covered with an additional waterproof dressing prior to bathing (obtained from your healthcare team).

Spare dressings will be left with you by the team. If the dressing on your cannula starts to peel up or come off, avoid removing it entirely. Instead, apply a second dressing over the top to hold it in place. If you are unable to manage this unaided you can phone **Hospital at Home on 07435178583 (8am to 6pm)** or **District Nurses on 01422 652291 (24 hrs a day)**.

What are the risks associated with IV fluids at home?

There is a risk of infection from the cannula site.

If you begin to feel unwell e.g. feverish or shivering, drowsier than usual, develop new confusion, feel unusually weak or dizzy when standing, or you have not passed urine in 12 hours, please contact the Hospital at Home team, your GP, or phone 111 for advice.

If you feel it is an emergency, please phone 999.

Useful telephone numbers.

Hospital at Home co-ordinator (8am to 6pm every day) Tel: 07435178583

District Nurses (use this number from 6pm to 8am) Tel: 01422 652291

Out of hours Doctor service (6pm to 8am & weekends) Tel: 111

If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

Hospital at Home Lead Nurse

Telephone: 07435178583

www.cht.nhs.uk

If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਕੋਈ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਤਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇੱਪਕੰਕਤ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਡੇ ਰਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور فارمیٹ ٹیزبان می درکار ہوں، تو
برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے می ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

"إذا احتجت الحصول على هذه المعلومة بشكل مغاير أو مترجمة إلى لغة مختلفة فيرجى منك الاتصال بالقسم المذكور أعلاه"