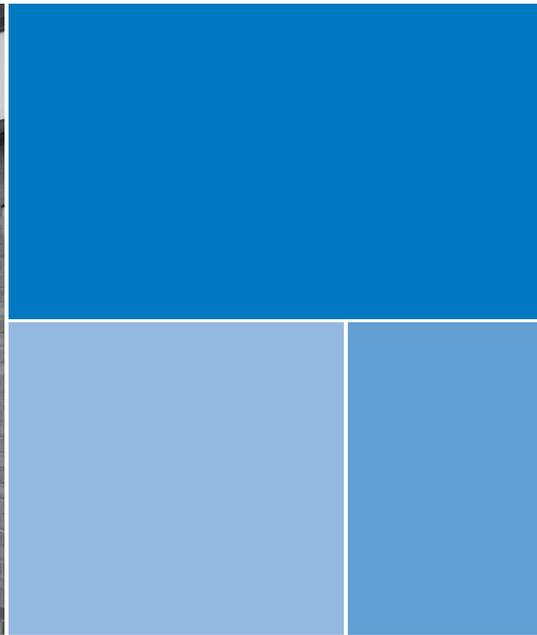


Home Intravenous Therapy (HIT) Service



Information for Parents and Carers

What is Home IV therapy?

Antibiotics are used to treat many types of bacterial infections. In some conditions these can be given directly into a vein, which are known as Intravenous (IV) antibiotics. These can be more effective than tablet antibiotics in treating infections. The IV antibiotics may be required for a few days or a few weeks depending on the type of infection and where it is in your body.

Home IV therapy allows patients to administer IV antibiotics in their own home by self-administration. It enables patients to have their IV antibiotic treatment safely and effectively without attending the hospital on a daily basis or staying in hospital.

Who decides if I should be given IV therapy at home?

The consultant in charge of your care will discuss with the microbiologist (a specialist in infections) the best course of treatment for you. The ambulatory nurse will then meet with you to assess and decide if you are suitable. They will fully explain the service and how it works to give you sufficient information to make the right choice for you. If you choose not to go onto home IV therapy, alternative options are available to continue your treatment based at the hospital.

Benefits of home IV therapy

You will be at home in a comfortable, familiar environment where you can continue your normal activities/lifestyle, including working if you are fit enough. You can be taught how to self-administer the drugs or a family member or friend could be trained to do this for you.

You will be under the supervision of the Ambulatory Unit who will monitor your progress through weekly blood results and reviews either in the Ambulatory Unit or with your own speciality consultant.

There is a reduced risk of hospital acquired infections and this service supports the hospital in reducing the number of patients in hospital.

Risks of home IV therapy

Some patients are allergic to antibiotics; usually they only have mild symptoms, such as a minor rash, or itchy skin. Unfortunately others can have more severe reactions that need immediate medical treatment. One dose of antibiotics will be given to you in hospital to ensure that you do not have an initial severe reaction. The IV catheter can occasionally become blocked or have an infection. The ambulatory nurse will provide you with contact numbers should you feel unwell or have concerns related to the antibiotic you are taking or the IV catheter used to administer it.

How are IV antibiotics administered?

IV medications are given into a vein through an IV access catheter inserted into your arm. This catheter will need to remain in your arm until the IV therapy is completed. The type of medication and how long it is required for will determine the type of catheter required. The ambulatory nurse will assess the type of catheter that meets your needs and will discuss this with you.

How the service works?

When the decision is made that you are suitable for the home IV therapy service the ambulatory nurse will:

- ensure that you have suitable venous access to administer the antibiotics
- arrange for a different type of IV access if required
- give you your first dose of antibiotics
- organise supplies of antibiotics and equipment that you will need at home
- teach you how to self-administer and ensure you are capable of doing this
- organise weekly blood monitoring
- ensure you have an appointment to be reviewed either by the ambulatory clinic doctor or your own speciality consultant.

Caring for your IV line

The exit site of the IV catheter will be covered by a transparent dressing and bandage which should be kept clean and dry in order to prevent infection. You should avoid excessive movement of your arm, or heavy lifting, as this may dislodge the catheter. Take extra care when dressing as this can dislodge the catheter. You can have a bath or a shower provided that the catheter is kept clean and dry. You can wear a plastic cover over the arm, such as clingfilm and/or a plastic bag. Swimming is not recommended as the line may become infected or dislodged.

Weekly clinic reviews

These will review your progress. Blood samples will be taken as the results are important in monitoring your response to treatment. Your IV catheter will be reviewed and you may be given a dose of antibiotics if your clinic attendance means that you will miss a dose at home. You will be given further supplies of antibiotics and equipment should you need to continue treatment for a further period of time.

Feeling unwell / problems

Occasionally patients can feel unwell as a result of the antibiotic they are taking or due to problems with the IV catheter.

Common symptoms to be aware of include:

- Skin reactions such as rashes
- Diarrhoea and vomiting
- Fever, feeling hot/cold, high temperature
- Swelling, pain or redness at the catheter insertion site or in the arm where the catheter is sited
- Unable to flush the cannula and give your IV antibiotics
- Wet, dislodged dressing
- Fluid leaking from the IV catheter when flushes or antibiotics given.

If you feel unwell at home with any of the above symptoms please contact us on the numbers in this leaflet.

Unfortunately some people have a severe allergic reaction to certain antibiotics, called anaphylaxis. Symptoms include:

- Flushing of the skin
- Nettle rash (hives) anywhere on the body
- Swelling of the throat and mouth
- Difficulty in swallowing or speaking
- Alterations in heart rate or palpitations
- Severe shortness of breath
- Abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting
- Sudden weakness or floppiness.

If you experience any of these symptoms following the administration of your antibiotic it is an emergency and you should dial 999 for an ambulance and go to your nearest A&E department.

If you are just generally unwell please contact your GP as normal.

Contact Information:

If you have any questions or concerns please contact:

Ambulatory clinic 01493 453775

(opening hours 8:30am-7:30pm, 7 days per week)

Emergency Admission and Discharge Unit 01493 452633

(open 24 hours a day)

Patient signature.....

Date.....

Staff signature.....

Date.....

Acknowledgement: West Suffolk Hospital

Home Intravenous Therapy Team

Feedback

We want your visit to be as comfortable as possible. Please talk to the person in charge if you have any concerns. If the ward/department staff are unable to resolve your concern, please ask for our Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) information. Please be assured that raising a concern will not impact on your care. **Before you leave the hospital you will be asked to complete a Friends and Family Test feedback card.** Providing your feedback is vital in helping to transform NHS services and to support patient choice.

Trust Values

Courtesy and respect

- A welcoming and positive attitude
- Polite, friendly and interested in people
- Value and respect people as individuals
So people feel **welcome**

Attentively kind and helpful

- Look out for dignity, privacy & humanity
- Attentive, responsive & take time to help
- Visible presence of staff to provide care
So people feel **cared for**

Responsive communication

- Listen to people & answer their questions
- Keep people clearly informed
- Involve people
So people feel **in control**

Effective and professional

- Safe, knowledgeable and reassuring
- Effective care / services from joined up teams
- Organised and timely, looking to improve
So people feel **safe**



The hospital can arrange for an interpreter or person to sign to assist you in communicating effectively with staff during your stay. Please let us know.

For a large print version of this leaflet, contact PALS 01493 453240

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