



Intravenous (IV) Antibiotic Therapy at Home

Please read this information carefully and keep it in a safe place



What is Intravenous (IV) Therapy?

IV Therapy is the term used when medication is given to you directly into a vein.

How does the medication get into my vein?

A suitable venous access device (line) will be discussed and agreed with you as part of your plan of care.

I thought that you had to be in hospital to have IV drugs?

Admission to hospital to give intravenous drugs is not always necessary. Most people would prefer the option to stay at home and this is possible with the support of the community nursing team. You may be offered appointments at a community clinic.

Who will give my IV medication and care for my line?

A community nurse will come to your home/clinic to care for your line, observe your condition and give your medication as prescribed.

Will I need to see a doctor?

Your doctor will be informed that you are receiving IV Therapy. If you need to see a doctor during your treatment the hospital or nurse will arrange this.

Are there any risks to receiving IV treatment at home?

Medicines like antibiotics can sometimes cause stomach upsets such as diarrhoea or vomiting. Skin reactions such as rashes can also occur rarely. If you have **any** side-effects or reactions to your medicine, please tell your community nurse.

Information for Patients

If you use the oral contraceptive pill, you may need to take additional contraceptive measures whilst on antibiotics.

If you take warfarin, you must inform your GP or anticoagulant clinic at the start and end of your antibiotic course. Your INR will need monitoring more frequently at these times.

Anaphylaxis, although rare, is a severe allergic reaction to a substance which your body perceives as a threat. Severe reactions to IV drugs happen to about 1 person in every 15,000 per year.

Symptoms often occur within minutes of exposure to the drug, but sometimes after hours.

They include:

- Generalised 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
- Severe asthma
- Severe nausea and vomiting
- Sudden weakness or floppiness

Any of these symptoms are signs of a serious reaction. Dial 999 immediately.

Some antibiotics have specific side effects. We have indicated any relevant to you in the list below. If you experience these symptoms you should alert your community nurse.

For further information on your antibiotics regarding side effects please refer to the instruction leaflet enclosed within your medication package.

Specific side effects to selected oral antibiotics are listed below:

- ☐ **Rifampicin** – tiredness, headaches, colouring of urine/sweat/tears.
- ☐ **Daptomycin** – muscle aches, tenderness, weakness or muscle cramps.

What if I feel unwell?

If the following symptoms occur, phone your community nurse for advice and further assessment:

- If you begin to feel unwell with fever, shivering, vomiting, shortness of breath, or dizziness
- If the area around the cannula or line feels hot, swollen or painful

You may need to be referred to hospital for further treatment. Do not hesitate to contact your community nurse at any time if you are in any doubt about any aspect of your treatment.

Information for Patients

What will happen at the end of my treatment?

A nurse or doctor will remove the line when your course of IV treatment is finished. A dry sterile dressing will be applied, which you can remove after 24 hours.

What happens if I am admitted to hospital whilst I am on treatment?

Please bring any medication supplied for your home IV's into hospital with you to minimise waste and highlight any fridge items to your ward nurse.

What if I need to speak to someone?

To contact a community nurse please call the appropriate number below:

Birmingham Patients	Solihull Patients	South Staffordshire Patients
0300 555 1919 Option 2 (24 hours)	0121 717 4333 (24 hours)	01827 306 226 (24 hours)

For specific questions relating to your treatment plan and out-patient follow up our infection clinical nurse specialists are available 9am-5pm Monday to Friday on either **07811 243298** or **0121 424 2175**.