

# Brochure - Home Healthcare Medical Devices: Infusion Therapy - Getting the Most Out of Your Pump

**Infusion therapy** involves medicines and fluids given through a catheter into your bloodstream. Therapies commonly used include antibiotics, chemotherapy drugs, pain medicines, and nutrients. This brochure gives you information on how to safely use your infusion pump that plays a major role during infusion therapy.

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## What do you do before using your infusion pump?

- Read your pump's Instructions for Use and keep it handy.
  - Make sure you understand when to use the pump.
  - Know what the pump display screen should say while you are using it.
  - Understand the alarms and error messages.
- Ask for a hands-on demonstration from your home healthcare provider (doctor, nurse or pharmacist) and invite your family to observe and practice with you.
  - Ask questions and take notes.
  - Review your home healthcare provider's guidelines for your pump.
  - Make sure you fully understand how to use your pump before beginning therapy.
- Call your home healthcare provider whenever you have questions or problems.

## What is your role in maintaining your pump?

- Always place pump and supplies on a clean surface.
- Keep food and drinks away from the area around your pump.
- Monitor children and animals when in the pump area.
- Before touching the pump
  - wash your hands thoroughly for 15 seconds
  - use liquid soap (not bar soap) and rinse
  - dry with a clean paper towel
- Change tubing according to your pump's Instructions for Use.
- Change batteries or recharge your pump as directed by your home healthcare provider.
- Compare your doctor's orders with your take-home instructions.

- Radio transmitters (such as cell phones, wireless hand-held computers, two-way radios) and other sources of strong electric and magnetic interference (EMI), such as large electric motors, could affect your pump.
  - Pump users, caregivers, and others should use caution and keep electromagnetic sources away from the pump.
  - Consult your pump manufacturer for more information and recommendations, if needed.

## **What is the role of your home healthcare provider and supplier in your infusion therapy?**

Your **home healthcare provider** will

- assess your health status
- discuss allergies and possible reactions
- check for correct prescription therapy (drug container label matches prescription)
- check all expiration dates before using medicine
- discuss proper storage of medicine
- teach self-care and provide directions
  - for example, how to care for your pump and test it for accuracy
- discuss the proper use of needles and safe disposal in a sharps container (thick plastic, leak-proof, capped container).
- place all other used infusion items in leak-proof containers and safely discard.
- assure that your pump is programmed to deliver the correct dose of medicine
- supply emergency contact phone numbers (24 hours a day)

Your pump **supplier** will

- handle all pump repairs
- supply batteries, equipment and accessories
- schedule routine maintenance

## **What are the most common problems with an infusion pump and how do you manage them?**

**Over- or under-infusion** - infusion pump does not deliver the correct dose at the proper rate

- Check tubing for leaks, kinks, twists and disconnects.

- Check for visible particles in the solution, tubing and filter area that might block the flow.
- Monitor pump to assure it is pumping.
- Check clamps to make sure they are open.
- Note infusion begin and end time to help monitor your pump's accuracy.
- Change tubing according to instructions.

### **Wrong programming**

- Check pump screen to be sure programmed rates and dosages match your medicine's label.

### **Wrong prescription**

- Call your home healthcare provider immediately if you think your medicine's label is not correct.

### **Batteries**

- In some cases, batteries should be used for back-up only.
- When you have to use batteries
  - change batteries according to your home healthcare provider's directions.
  - an alarm will occur when the batteries are low
  - keep an extra supply of new batteries with you at all times
  - ask your suppliers about the life of your batteries

### **What problems should prompt you to call your home healthcare provider?**

- trouble breathing
- allergic reaction
  - rash, hives
- changes in behavior
- fever
- problems at catheter site
  - pain, leaking, foul odor, pus, hardness, redness, swelling or skin warmth

**Call 911 for life-threatening emergency.**

## What should you do to prepare for an emergency?

- Make sure your name is on the community emergency list so that you will be assisted in cases of emergency, such as power failure or other disasters.
- Keep extra batteries and know how to replace them.
- Keep emergency and after-hours phone numbers handy.
- Have a flashlight available.

## When can you expect results from your therapy?

Every person's condition is different; it is not easy to say when the therapy will begin to work.

- Follow your home healthcare provider's directions.

**Always call your home healthcare provider if you have questions**

## What do you need to know about traveling with your infusion pump?

- Before going out of town, contact the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Consumer Response Center toll-free at 1-866-289-9673 or go to <http://www.tsa.gov> (<http://www.tsa.gov>) with questions about traveling with your pump.
  - Ask your supplier about additional needs when traveling.
  - Before going through a security screening station, inform the staff that you have an infusion pump and ask to be searched manually.
  - Going through the screening process may set off your pump's alarm.
  - Security screening systems may cause your pump not to work properly.
  - After going through security, check the status of your pump.
  - For travel to another country, make sure your pump will work with that country's power system. If it does not, you will need an adapter for the power source (voltage and frequency) and for the plug so that your pump will work.
- When traveling locally, pass through anti-theft systems and security systems (found in stores and in public places), quickly without stopping or touching the system.

## How do you report any close calls, serious injuries, or deaths?

Report these events to the Food and Drug Administration at 1-800-332-1088 (24 hours) and to your suppliers. FDA will take action when needed to protect the public's health. For more information, visit our website: [MedWatch \(/medwatch-fda-safety-information-and-adverse-event-reporting-program\)](https://www.fda.gov/medwatch)

## Endorsing Organizations

American Association for Homecare: <http://www.aahomecare.org>  
(<http://www.aahomecare.org>)  (<http://www.fda.gov/about-fda/website-policies/website-disclaimer>)

National Association for Home Care and Hospice: <http://www.nahc.org> (<http://www.nahc.org>)  
 (<http://www.fda.gov/about-fda/website-policies/website-disclaimer>)

The National Home Infusion Association: <http://www.nhia.org> (<http://www.nhia.org>)   
(<http://www.fda.gov/about-fda/website-policies/website-disclaimer>)

Infusion Nurses Society: <http://www.ins1.org> (<http://www.ins1.org>)   
(<http://www.fda.gov/about-fda/website-policies/website-disclaimer>)

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## Caregiver Tips for Children on Infusion Therapy

### What is your role as a caregiver?

- Explain the reasons for using the pump and infusion therapy.
  - Use language your child will understand.
  - Encourage your child to ask questions.
  - Be honest and try to use positive words and pictures.
- Show your child how he or she can help.
  - Allow children to help with their own care.
  - For a small child, try play-acting with a doll.
- Check on your child as often as your home healthcare provider recommends.
  - A younger child may need to be checked more often than an older child.
- Report any change in your child's physical or mental condition to your home healthcare provider.
- Encourage children to play in a manner that is safe while they are receiving therapy.
- If you have any concerns, speak with your home healthcare provider.

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