

Consumer information (for adults)

Care of your IV drip

What is an IV (intravenous) drip?

An IV drip is a thin sterile **plastic** tube inserted into a vein usually in your arm or hand. It is used to administer fluids and medications. It is also known as a peripheral intravenous cannula.



The IV drip is taped to the skin and covered with a transparent dressing to keep it clean and dry.

A bandage may also be applied.

A board may also be used as a splint to prevent damage to the IV drip from limb movement.

Looking after your IV drip

Your doctor or nurse will be looking after your IV drip. They will monitor the drip at least once each shift and before giving any fluids or medication.

- > **Clean hands** - before anybody touches the IV drip they must clean their hands. You can remind health care workers to clean their hands before they touch you.
- > **Keep the IV drip dry** - avoid getting the IV drip wet; use an additional waterproof covering when showering.
- > **Avoid being disconnected from the IV drip tubing** – this may increase the risk of infection.
- > **Avoid knocking or pulling on your IV drip** – wear loose clothing and minimal jewellery.



Please **try not to touch** your IV drip, bags of fluid or the IV line – ask your doctor or nurse for help.

Please tell your doctor or nurse immediately if you experience any of the following:

- > you feel feverish, have a temperature, feel hot, cold or shivery
- > there is pain / redness / heat or swelling near where the IV drip enters your skin
- > you see bleeding or leakage from where the drip enters your skin
- > the IV drip dressing is wet, falling off or is uncomfortable



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When will your IV drip be removed?

- > Your doctor or nurse will decide when your IV drip should be removed when your treatment is finished.
- > A new IV drip should be replaced with a new one at least every 3 days, if required.
- > After the drip is removed, the site where it was inserted through your skin should be checked for the next 2-3 days for any signs of infection, i.e. pain, redness, swelling or ooze.
- > Your IV drip should be removed before you are discharged from hospital, unless your doctor has ordered for it to stay in.

Would you like more information?

We care about you. Please talk to your nurse or doctor about any concerns you have with your IV drip

For more information

Hospital telephone:

www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/Hospitalinfections

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*SA Health Safety and Quality Community Advisory Group



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