



A lifetime of specialist care

Royal Brompton & Harefield **NHS**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Home Intravenous (IV) therapy service





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*This leaflet is a general guide to the Home Intravenous (IV) therapy service and intravenous (IV) medication. It does not replace the need for personal advice from a qualified healthcare professional. Please ask us if you have any questions.*

## The Home Intravenous (IV) therapy service

Welcome to the Home Intravenous (IV) therapy service. Home IV therapy allows patients to have treatment in their own homes. Many people prefer having IV therapy in their own homes rather than in hospital. It means they can be more independent, spend time with loved ones and continue with work or study.

This leaflet provides patients and carers with information about how to safely give IV therapy at home. The booklet complements the face-to-face training that our nursing teams provide.

You can find more information, including videos about home IV therapy on our website (see *More information* on page 13).





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## What is IV therapy?

IV therapy is medication given intravenously (through the veins) straight into the bloodstream.

Different types of long thin flexible tubes called IV lines are used for IV therapy. The IV line chosen for your treatment will depend on your veins and how long you will need medication.

The IV line is inserted into your vein using a needle and held in place by a dressing. The IV line can stay in place for the whole of the IV medication course.

If you have home IV therapy, you will still need to come to the hospital for the first dose of medication you have been prescribed.

During your visit to the hospital, a nurse will teach you or your carer how to give the IV medication.

You will be asked to wait for at least an hour in hospital after being given the first dose to check the medication does not give you any side effects (also called adverse reactions).

You will then be able to leave the hospital to have the rest of your treatment at home.

Please note: patients who have a port-a-cath (an implanted device which allows easy access to veins) may be able to receive IV medication using the device. A nurse will advise you about this.

## What happens when I go home?

A member of your healthcare team will explain what will happen when you go home. Every patient will be invited to an end of treatment appointment which will take place in person, by phone or video call.

You will also be able to contact members of your healthcare team if you have a concern at any stage of your treatment. See contact details on page 12.

If you need physiotherapy support, you can speak to one of our physiotherapists at a 'drop in' clinic or a pre-booked appointment, or look at videos and detailed information on our website (see page 13 for details).

## Will I need to have blood tests?

Blood tests are only needed for certain IV medications. If blood tests are needed for your IV medication, we will discuss them with you.

If you need blood tests, it is **very important** that you have them at the right times. IV medication blood tests are usually carried out to ensure that your dose is within the correct therapeutic (treatment) range.


If the medication level is above the acceptable range, it could lead to kidney damage or hearing loss. If the medication is below this range, the medication will not be working as it should be.

## What happens if I feel unwell while having Home IV?

**If you feel unwell while having Home IV treatment or you develop new symptoms, stop the medication and contact your healthcare team for advice. See contact details on page 12.**

New symptoms could include:

- a headache
- temperature
- fever or shivering
- flushing (warmth and rapid reddening of your neck, upper chest, or face)
- feeling sick (nausea) or vomiting

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- mild wheezing
  - chest pain
  - a rash
  - pins or needles or tingling of lips.

If you have severe symptoms such as:

- swelling of the lips or tongue
- bluish discoloration of the lips, fingers or toes
- wheezing, difficulty breathing or swallowing
- or you collapse

**Stop taking the medication immediately. Dial 999 and ask for an ambulance.** Say that the emergency is ‘**anaphylaxis**’ (severe allergic reaction).

Remember: Royal Brompton and Harefield hospitals do not have accident and emergency (A&E) departments.

## What if I have other concerns?

Speak to a member of your team if you have any concerns. If at any time you do not want to continue with your home IV therapy or feel unable to cope with the treatment, please tell us. We can discuss the different treatments available. See contact details on page 12.

## How to deliver medication through an IV line

When you visit the hospital, your nurse will teach you how to deliver medication through an IV line.

You will be given plenty of time to ask questions and practise giving the medication.

It is very important that you know how to deliver medication through an IV line. This is to prevent any problems with the line so it can stay in place and continue to work properly for the whole time you need it.

Here is some general guidance about giving medication and details of your dosage. You will be given detailed step-by-step instructions on a separate information sheet. You can also watch videos on the Home IV section of our website (see *More information* on page 13).

## Step one: hygiene

Each time you give IV medication you need to reduce the chance of infections getting into the bloodstream. To help reduce the chances of that happening, you will be taught the Aseptic Non-Touch Technique (ANTT) that nurses use.

ANTT is used to make sure that a person giving IV therapy medication does not touch certain key parts of the equipment and medication, such as the top of a syringe, needle or containers.

Here are the basic hygiene instructions you need to follow:

- **Before you start giving the medication:** wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. You need to wash your palms, the back of both hands, fingers, thumbs and wrists carefully. Dry your hands with a paper or clean towel.
- **In between the different stages of preparing and giving the medication:** use alcohol gel to clean your hands. The nurse will show you how to do this during your training.
- Clean the surface of the table or tray you are using to prepare the medication with antibacterial surface cleaner, disinfectant wipes or warm soapy water. Allow the surface to dry.



- Use this surface to prepare your IV medication.
- Use the yellow sharps bin provided to dispose of any sharps (anything medical that has sharp edges, needles, for example).
- When you have finished giving the medication, clean the surface of the table or tray, and wash your hands again for at least 20 seconds.



## Step two: preparing medication

**Always** follow these instructions below when storing and managing medication:

- Store your medication and equipment as advised (see the labels or information that comes with them).
- Keep glass vials and ampoules until you have finished giving medication (in case you have a side effect and we need to find out more about how it happened). Then put them into the yellow sharps bin provided.
- Ensure all medication and equipment is kept out of reach of children.
- Your medication must be given as prescribed. Having too much or too little medication can be harmful and make you very ill.
- If you forget to give a dose of medication, do not give it at a later time. Instead, contact your healthcare team and have your next dose at the usual time.

**Check your medication is correct before giving IV medication. Do this by looking at the label/s on the medication and details on your prescription. Check:**

- Is my name on the medication?
- Is this the correct medication?
- Is this the correct dose of medication?
- The expiry date (do not use the medication if it is past the expiry date)
- Prepare all the equipment you need e.g. needles and diluents (mixing liquids)
- Check the time – are you giving medication at the correct time?



## About my medication

Your nurse will provide you with further information about the frequency and dosage of the medication you have been prescribed, and write the details in the table below.

Name of medication	What is this medication for?	What dose needs to be given?	Times of doses

IV medication can be given in different ways listed below. Your IV medication will be delivered using (to be filled in by the nurse):

Pre-mixed syringes	✓
Ready to use infuser device	✓
Adding medication to infuser devices	✓
Bolus (giving by injection)	✓
Infusion gravity giving sets	✓

Your nurse will provide you with training and a separate information sheet containing step-by-step instructions for giving your medication.

You can view a video showing the way your IV medication should be given on our website (see *More information* on page 13).



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## Contact details

Call the main the main hospital switchboard on **0330 12 88121**, and ask the operator for the extensions below (or use the email addresses listed below each one):

### Adult cystic fibrosis (CF) team

CF clinical nurse specialist (CNS) **ext 88065**  
email: [CFHomecare@rbht.nhs.uk](mailto:CFHomecare@rbht.nhs.uk)  
(Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm)

### Interstitial lung disease (ILD) team

Interstitial lung disease (ILD) CNS **07891 583 141**  
email: [ILD@rbht.nhs.uk](mailto:ILD@rbht.nhs.uk)  
(Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm)

### Host defence and primary ciliary dyskinesia (PCD) team

Host defence and primary ciliary dyskinesia (PCD) CNS call the switchboard and ask for **bleep 1005**  
(Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm)

Host defence patients can also email [rbht-tr.hostdefence@nhs.net](mailto:rbht-tr.hostdefence@nhs.net)

PCD patients can also email [AdultPCD@rbht.nhs.uk](mailto:AdultPCD@rbht.nhs.uk)

**If your request is urgent outside these hours, please contact the adult registrar on-call.**

Adult registrar on-call call the switchboard and ask for **bleep 7065**  
(24-hour service)

Specialist respiratory pharmacy team email: [respiratorypharmacy@rbht.nhs.uk](mailto:respiratorypharmacy@rbht.nhs.uk)  
(Monday to Friday, 9am-5.30pm)

## Medicines advisory service

If you have any questions or concerns about your medication, please speak to the staff caring for you or contact our medicines advisory service.

Tel: **020 7351 8901 ext. 2222** (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm)

Email: **medinfo@rbht.nhs.uk**

## More information

See videos and more information on the Home Intravenous (IV) therapy service page on the Trust's website:

[www.rbht.nhs.uk/our-services/clinical\\_support/home-intravenous-iv-therapy-service](http://www.rbht.nhs.uk/our-services/clinical_support/home-intravenous-iv-therapy-service)

Home IV physiotherapy:

[www.rbht.nhs.uk/our-services/clinical\\_support/home-intravenous-iv-therapy-service/physiotherapy-service](http://www.rbht.nhs.uk/our-services/clinical_support/home-intravenous-iv-therapy-service/physiotherapy-service)



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## Your notes

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If you have concerns about any aspect of the service you have received in hospital and feel unable to talk to those people responsible for your care, call the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on:

- Royal Brompton Hospital – 020 7349 7715
- Harefield Hospital – 01895 826 572

You can also email [pals@rbht.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@rbht.nhs.uk). This is a confidential service.



Royal Brompton Hospital  
Sydney Street  
London  
SW3 6NP  
Tel: 0330 12 88121

Harefield Hospital  
Hill End Road  
Harefield  
Middlesex  
UB9 6JH  
Tel: 0330 12 88121

Website: [www.rbht.nhs.uk](http://www.rbht.nhs.uk)

إذا كنت ترغب في الحصول على ترجمة فورية لمضمون هذه الوثيقة إلى اللغة العربية، يرجى منك الاتصال بأحد مستخدمينا بجناح المصلحة التي يتم فيها استشفائك. أحد موظفينا سيسعى لترتيب إجراءات الترجمة وإتمامها في الوقت المناسب لك.

Brosurteki bilginin Türkçe tercemesi için tedavi görüyor olduğunuz bölüme bas vurunuz. Bölüm personeli tercümenin gerçekleşmesini en kısa zamanda ayarlayacaktır.

