

Tips to Improve IV Starts

The nurses at HomeMed understand that getting your IV started can be a stressful part of your home infusion experience. We hope that these tips will help improve your success and make your experience easier, less stressful, and less painful! We will send you a text message with a copy of this document before each of your infusions as a reminder.

What should I do the day before my infusion?

Today is the day to focus on hydration (getting enough fluids). Unless your doctor has instructed you not to, **you should drink at least 64 ounces of non-caffeine fluids**. Water is best, but fluids that contain electrolytes like Gatorade® are also fine.

What should I do the day of my infusion?

- Avoid caffeine and nicotine for at least 2 hours before to your infusion appointment. Caffeine and nicotine make your veins smaller and harder to find.
- Avoid cold temperatures for at least 1 hour before your appointment.
- Avoid drinking large amounts of water or other fluids (more than a few sips at a time) for 1 hour before your appointment.
- Light exercise can help make your veins more visible, so feel free to lift some weights or do some stretching before your appointment.
- Eating certain foods before your infusion can help make your veins more visible. Examples of these foods include:
 - Spinach, celery, lettuce and kale
 - Red meat, sausages, and beans
 - Green tea

- Review your medications with your nurse. We can make sure you are not taking any over-the-counter (non-prescription) medications the day of your infusion that may make your veins smaller. Examples of these include decongestants (like Sudafed®) and antihistamines (like Zyrtec® or Benadryl®).

What do I do if I still have questions?

Contact your infusion nurse directly or call HomeMed. Our 24-hour number is (800) 862-2731. Please identify yourself to the hospital operator as a HomeMed patient when you call.

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Author: Colleen May, RN BSN CRNI IgCN

Reviewers: HomeMed Patient Education Committee

Edited by: Brittany Batell, MPH MSW CHES®

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