

# Ambulatory Infusion Suites at Home Care Services



## **What are infusions?**

An infusion is one way to give therapies when a child needs to receive them through a vein (by IV). The therapy may be chemotherapy to treat cancer, biotherapies, immunoglobulin, and antibiotics or medicines for other conditions. Infusions can also be given to put medicine or another liquid into your child's body for the purpose of providing nutritional support (TPN).

## **What's special about infusion services with Home Care Services?**

The nurses at Home Care Services are experts at starting IVs, accessing central lines and responding to any emergency that might arise during an infusion, such as an allergic reaction to a medicine. Nurses monitor each patient closely. This means that many children can receive their infusions in an infusion suite instead of needing to be admitted to the hospital.

## **Who needs infusion services?**

We work with children who have health conditions such as blood disorders, cancer, immune disorders, genetic abnormalities, gastrointestinal problems and rheumatology disorders.

## **What should we bring to the visit?**

Bring a bag full of activities or quiet toys from home that your child can play with during the visit. Long infusions can feel even longer when your child is bored. We have some toys and videos, but things from home may be best for your child. If your child is young, bring a comfort item, like a favorite blanket or stuffed animal. This can make them feel safe in a new place. A portable CD player with headphones or MP3 player might help older children relax. Other ideas for things to bring include: books, coloring supplies, Play-Doh, pinwheels, board games or a deck of cards. TVs, DVD players, and X-Boxes are in each infusion space. We have some videos and games; however, your child may want to bring their favorite to play during their visit.

You may want to bring your child's favorite snack if the infusion is scheduled to be lengthy.

If your child takes medicines and is scheduled for a regular dose during the infusion visit, bring it with you. Your Home Care Services scheduling nurse will help you know how to handle your child's doses of other medicines.

You may be required to give some medicines by mouth prior to the infusion as directed by your doctor. This helps minimize side effects your child may experience from the infusion.

It is your responsibility to remember to give these. If you forget, the infusion may be delayed as we do not carry oral medications in the infusion suites.

### To Learn More

- Home Care Services  
425-482-4000,  
toll-free 800-888-4429
- Your child's  
healthcare provider
- [www.seattlechildrens.org](http://www.seattlechildrens.org)

### Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your child's nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.
- For Deaf and hard of hearing callers  
206-987-2280 (TTY)

### How can I prepare my child for the infusion visit?

- Ask the doctor who referred you for the infusion for a prescription for topical anesthetic to numb where the IV goes in. Put it on your child's skin as instructed by your child's doctor or nurse.
- Understand your child's fears about having an infusion of medicine.
- If your child is nervous about the IV start, talk about what can help make it easier. Counting, blowing, watching, looking away or looking at something else are some ideas.
- Decide on a "job" for everyone. For example, your child's job may be to stay still and "blow out candles" and Mom's job may be to hold the "candles" (her fingers). Or, your child's job may be to squeeze a squish ball and Dad's job is to hug his child tight.
- Practice breathing in and blowing out to relax when you are at home and nothing medical is happening. This makes it easier to use breathing techniques to cope and stay calm if needed during a medical procedure. You can "blow out candles," blow on a pinwheel or blow bubbles if it helps. Have your child breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth.
- Give your child choices during the visit. Simple choices can help your child feel that they are part of the process and gives them control over some of what happens. Examples include choosing which leg or arm for checking blood pressure and who should count "1-2-3" before the poke, the nurse or Mom.
- If your child has a history of anxiety with IV starts or other pokes, call one of the Children's Child Life Specialists at 206-987-3646 to talk about other ideas that may help your child cope. You can also speak to one of the home care nurses for other suggestions.

### Who can stay with my child during the visit?

Parents are expected to stay with their child during their infusion visit. Our infusion space has room for your child and other family members. We have a lobby that you are welcome to use during your child's visit.

To prevent the spread of illness, we request that sick family members or visitors not come to the Ambulatory Infusion Suite.

If your child has an appointment and is sick or has a cough, please contact your child's healthcare provider to find out if you should keep the appointment. If you are told to keep the appointment, let a Home Care Services Clinical Coordinator know your child is sick by calling 425-482-4132. Also tell them if your child needs to be kept away from other patients because of sickness. These are called isolation precautions.

If your healthcare provider says to cancel the appointment, also call the Home Care Services Clinical Coordinator.

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Seattle Children's offers interpreter services for Deaf, hard of hearing or non-English speaking patients, family members and legal representatives free of charge. Seattle Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call the Family Resource Center at 206-987-2201.

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children's. However, your child's needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child's healthcare provider.

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