

Ambulatory Infusion Unit

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 blood products, such as a transfusion of red blood cells or platelets; chemotherapy to treat cancer; biotherapies; immunoglobulin; 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 doing a test to diagnose a health problem.

What's special about infusion services at Children's?

The nurses on the unit 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. They are all certified in giving chemotherapy and biotherapies, and some are certified in oncology. Nurses monitor each patient closely. This means that many children can receive their infusions in the unit instead of needing to be admitted to the hospital.

Who needs infusion services?

We work with children who have health conditions such as blood diseases, 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 clinic visits and 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, bubbles, pinwheels, board games or a deck of cards. TVs and DVD and VCR players are available in each infusion space. Your child may want to bring a movie to watch during their visit. We do not provide video games, so if your child prefers this for entertainment, you may want to bring a Game Boy or other handheld game.

Snacks and lunch can be provided for patients getting long infusions. However, your child may still want to bring their favorite snack.

If your child takes medicines and is scheduled for a regular dose during the infusion visit, it has to come from the Children's pharmacy.

How can I prepare my child for the infusion visit?

- Ask the doctor who referred you for the infusion for a prescription for EMLA cream.



This is a cream that you place on your child's skin to help numb the skin before the IV is started. Put it on your child's skin 1 hour before the IV is placed.

- Understand your child's fears about going to the hospital.
- 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 their 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 our Child Life Specialists at (206) 987-3646 to talk about other ideas that may help your child cope.

Who can stay with my child during the visit?

Parents are expected to stay with their child during their infusion visit. If this is not possible, contact the Ambulatory Infusion Unit at (206) 987-2106 at least 48 hours before your child's visit. Each infusion space has room for your child and two family members or visitors. Siblings are welcome to stay in the infusion unit 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 Unit.

If your child has an appointment in the unit and is sick or has a cough, please contact your child's health-care provider to find out if you should keep the appointment. If you are told to keep the appointment, let the registration staff know your child is sick. Also tell them if your child needs to be kept away from other patients because of sickness. These are called isolation precautions.

If your health-care provider says to cancel the appointment, call the Ambulatory Infusion Unit at (206) 987-2106 to let them know.

Where is the Ambulatory Infusion Unit?

The Ambulatory Infusion Unit is on the 6th floor, near the Balloon elevators. It is attached to our Hematology/Oncology Clinic. Park in the Whale garage and register at the 6th floor registration desk.

TO LEARN MORE

Ambulatory Infusion Unit, (206) 987-2106
Children's Hospital
(206) 987-2000 (Voice)
(206) 987-2280 (TTY)
(866) 987-2000 (Toll-free for business use only)

Children's offers interpreter services for deaf, hard-of-hearing or non-English speaking families free of charge. To request these services, ask your child's nurse or health-care provider, or call (206) 987-5010 (Voice) or (206) 987-2280 (TTY). Please provide as much advance notice as possible.

Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Please call Marketing Communications at (206) 987-5205.

Children's provides health care for the special needs of children, regardless of race, sex, creed, ethnicity or disability. Financial assistance for medically necessary services is based on family income and hospital resources, and is provided to children under age 21 whose primary residence is in Washington, Alaska, Montana or Idaho.

Children's

Hospital & Regional Medical Center

www.seattlechildrens.org