

Managing Total Parenteral Nutrition at Home

About Total Parenteral Nutrition

Total parenteral nutrition (TPN) is a method of infusing a specialized nutrition solution into your body through a catheter into your vein. Your doctor will decide if you can eat or drink while on TPN.

Your nurse will help you and your caregiver get the support you need to manage TPN at home. You will be able to care for your catheter and infuse your TPN independently.

Storing TPN Supplies

Your nurse will work with you to order your TPN supplies and help you or your caregiver make arrangements for the pick-up or delivery of the items you need.

- The TPN solution must be stored in the refrigerator.
- Other TPN supplies should be stored in a clean and dry area away from pets and small children.

Reducing the Risk of Infection

It is very important to wash your hands before touching your catheter or sterile supplies. Use the following proper hand washing technique:

- Wet your hands with water.
- Apply soap and lather your hands by rubbing them together for at least 20 seconds.
- Remember to lather the back of your hands, between your fingers and under your nails.
- Rinse and dry your hands with a clean towel.

After you have washed your hands, do not touch anything except your catheter and TPN supplies.

It is also very important to keep the insertion area clean and disinfected. Your nurse will teach you and your caregiver how to disinfect this area.

Preparing and Starting TPN

A nurse will provide teaching and ongoing support so you and your caregiver can manage your TPN.

1. Remove the TPN solution from the refrigerator about 1-2 hours before using so it warms to room temperature. Do not put the solution in the microwave or hot water.
2. Check the bag for leaks, particles or oil sitting on the surface of the solution. If this occurs, contact your nurse before using the TPN solution.
3. Gather all supplies including the infusion pump, tubing, pole, syringes, flush solution and any additives to be added.
4. Choose an area that is clean, quiet and free from drafts.
5. Wash your hands again.
6. Prepare the TPN solution with any additives, as instructed.
7. Hang the TPN solution bag on your IV pole.
8. Attach the tubing to the TPN solution bag and allow the solution to flow through the tubing to remove any air.
9. Insert the tubing cassette into the infusion pump and prepare to flush the catheter. (The catheter must be flushed with normal saline solution before and after each use. A heparin flush solution may also be required.) A nurse will advise you if another type of solution is also required for flushing.
10. Start infusion by programming the pump to infuse TPN as instructed by the nurse.

Disconnecting TPN Tubing & Flushing Catheter

Your nurse will teach you and your caregiver how to disconnect the tubing and flush your catheter.

1. Wash your hands.
2. Stop the infusion pump.
3. Clamp the tubing and your catheter.
4. Disconnect the tubing from your catheter.
5. Unclamp and flush your catheter as directed by your nurse.

Blood Work

Your physician and dietitian need a regular blood sample to prescribe your TPN solution. Your nurse will draw a blood sample from your catheter.

You, or your caregiver, are responsible for:

- Picking up blood sample kits from the lab. The lab will usually provide about 5 kits at a time.
- Arranging for your blood sample to be transported to the lab within 4 hours of being taken. If you do not have transportation, local couriers charge a nominal fee for this service.
- Contacting the lab when additional blood sample kits are required. Please give the lab 1 week advance notice.

Your Care Team	Phone	When to Contact
Physician		<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Health concerns (e.g., severe pain, fever/chills, shortness of breath)● Other health issues
Care Coordinator		<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Questions or concerns about your home care services
Nurse		<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Changes in how you feel● Pain or bleeding at site of catheter insertion● Concerns about your TPN solution● Issues putting TPN solution into your body● Problems flushing catheter● Pump alarm concerns● Other TPN concerns
Dietitian		<ul style="list-style-type: none">● For nutrition questions or concerns
Pharmacy		<ul style="list-style-type: none">● For TPN supplies and questions
Lab		<ul style="list-style-type: none">● For blood sample kits