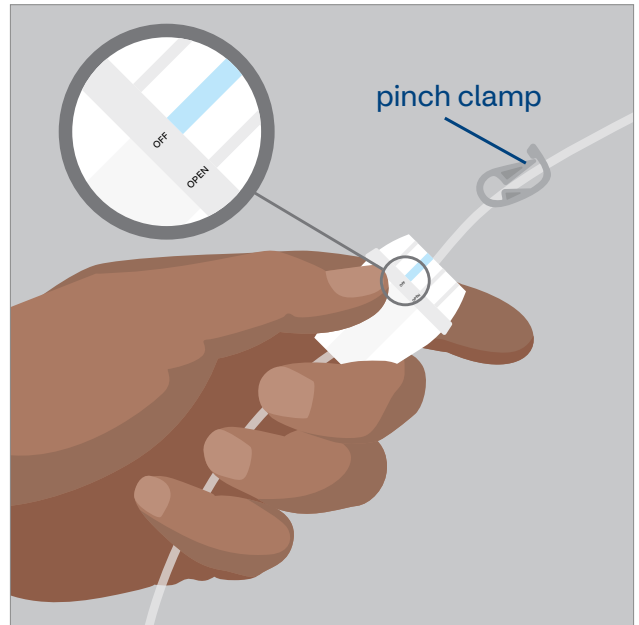**Administration Guide**

Gravity Infusion

Before You Begin

There are important steps you must take before you begin. Please refer to your SASH Teaching Mat for more details.
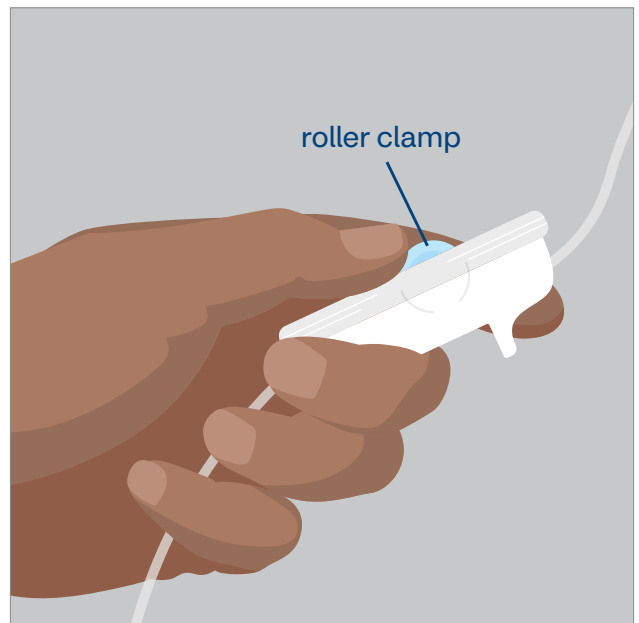
1. **Clean** your work area.
2. **Wash** your hands.
3. **Gather** your supplies:
   - (2) Pre-filled saline flush syringes
   - (1) Pre-filled heparin flush syringe (if ordered)
   - Medication bag (at room temperature)
   - Administration tubing (gravity or rate flow)
   - Intravenous (IV) pole
   - Alcohol pads
   - Sterile end cap (if needed)

4. **Inspect** the medication label:
   - Correct patient name
   - Correct medication and dose
   - Medication is not expired
   - Length of infusion
   - The solution should be clear, consistent in color and free of any visible particles

Prime Your Tubing

1. Remove the tubing from the package and untwist to its full length. Close the pinch clamp on the tubing. **If you have a rate flow set**, turn the dial to the "OFF" position. **If you have a gravity set**, close the roller clamp on the tubing by rolling it down to the smaller end of the clamp. This will prevent the flow of medication.
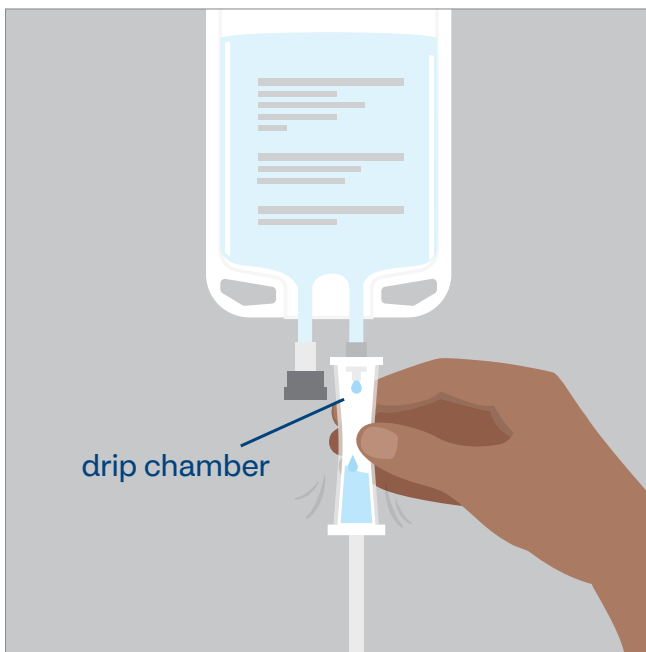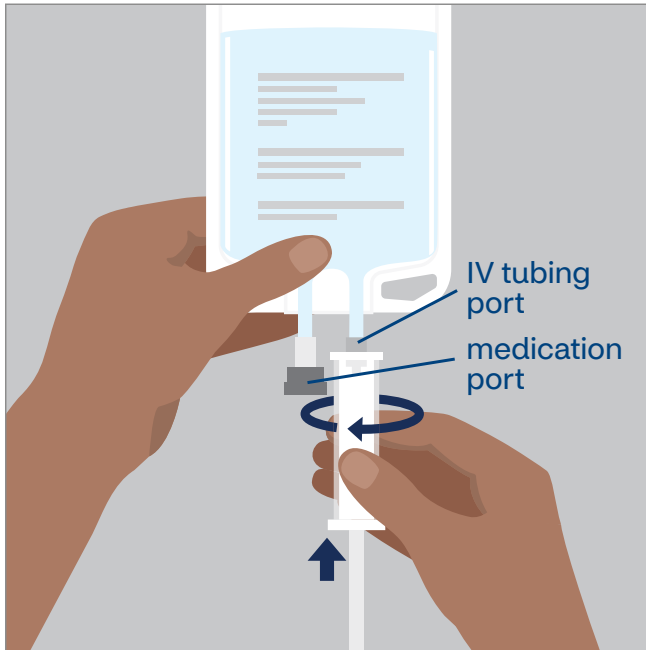

Rate flow set

Gravity set

2. Remove the cover or tab from the IV tubing port at the bottom of the bag. Be careful not to touch the exposed end with your fingers. Next, pull off the protective cover from the spike at the end of the tubing. Be sure not to touch the spike; keep the fingers on the drip chamber.

3. Insert the spike into the port of the medication bag using a twisting and pushing motion.

IV tubing port

medication port

drip chamber

4. Hang the medication bag from the IV pole. Gently squeeze the drip chamber of the tubing and release. Repeat as needed to allow the solution to fill the chamber about halfway.

5. **If you have a rate flow set**, open the pinch clamp on the administration tubing. Turn the dial until you see medication dripping into the drip chamber.

   If you have a gravity set, slowly open the roller clamp on the tubing.

6. Be sure you allow the fluid to flow at a slow steady pace; if you do it too quickly, air bubbles are more likely to occur.

7. Watch as the medication moves all the way through the tubing until a drop of fluid forms at the end. **If you have a rate flow set**, clamp the tubing.

   If you have a gravity set, close the roller clamp. Your tubing is now "primed" and ready to use.
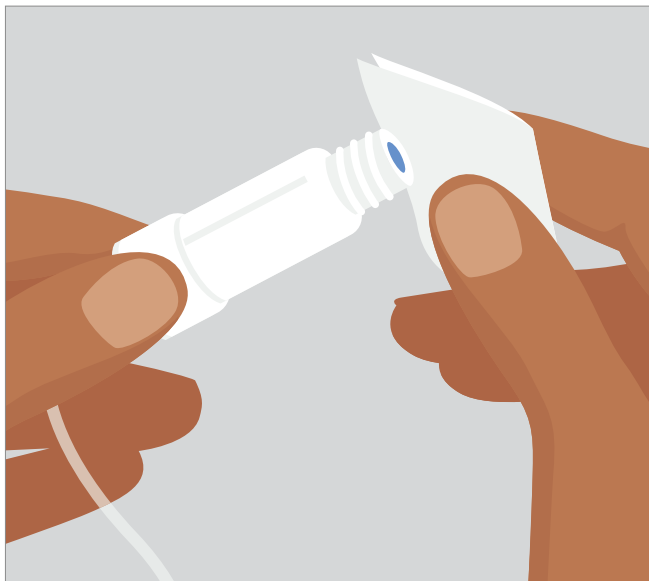

pinch clamp

Flush Your Catheter

Flush your catheter before administering your medication. Please refer to your SASH Teaching Mat for more details.

Administer Medication

1. Scrub the catheter injection cap with a new alcohol pad for 15 seconds. Let it air dry for 5 seconds.

2. Be careful not to touch the top of the injection cap with your fingers while you are cleaning it.

3. Take the cover off of the end of the IV tubing. Connect the IV tubing by pushing and turning the end of the tubing clockwise into the injection cap until secure.

4. Start the infusion.

   If you have a rate flow set, count the drops as directed by your nurse. Start at the _____mL/hr as shown on the medication label. Count drops and adjust the dial accordingly. Repeat this process until you reach the mL/hr that is on the medication label.

   If you have a gravity set, slowly open the roller clamp on the tubing to start the infusion. Adjust the roller clamp to infuse at the rate of _____ drops/minute. Count the drops as directed by your nurse to make sure you are giving yourself the correct rate of medication.

5. Your medication will infuse in about _____ minutes/hours. Watch the infusion near the end of this time so that you can stop the fluid flow. When the bag is empty but there is still fluid in the drip chamber, stop the fluid flow by quickly pinching or closing the clamp on the tubing. **If using a rate flow set**, also turn the dial to the "OFF" position.

6. Remove the tubing from the catheter injection cap. If you will be infusing more than once a day, place a sterile end cap on the end of the tubing. This will keep the end of the tubing sterile so it can be used for your next infusion. Do not allow the tubing to dangle onto the floor. Drape the tubing up and over the IV pole to prevent from touching the floor.

7. You should use a new tubing every 24 hours (one tubing per day) or more often, if directed by your nurse.

Flush Your Catheter

Flush your catheter after administering your medication. Please refer to your SASH Teaching Mat for more details.

Troubleshooting

NOTE: Keep the IV bag above the IV site and avoid changing your position too often. This may cause your IV to run faster or slower. For example, standing up can cause your IV to infuse slower or stop (causing blood to back up into the tubing). Sitting down may cause your IV to infuse faster.

Problem	Solution
IV infusion is running too slowly or IV fluid is not dripping in the drip chamber	• Check the infusion rate by counting drops and increase infusion if infusing slower than ordered • Check the IV bag and make sure it's not empty • Check that the tubing is not clamped or kinked • Change the position of your arm • Check height of the bag. If it's too low, you may need to raise the height of the IV pole • Flush your catheter with saline as your nurse showed you • Make sure the medication is at room temperature
IV infusing too quickly	• Check the rate of infusion by counting drops and slow infusion if infusing faster than ordered
Pain when infusing medication	• Check your IV site. If it's red, puffy or swollen, notify your nurse
Blood in the IV tubing	• Look to see if the IV bag is empty. If your infusion is done, disconnect the tubing from the IV and discard the tubing. • If the infusion has stopped dripping, but there is fluid in the bag, refer to the tips in the *IV infusion is running too slowly* section above

Want to learn more?

Watch a how-to-video on our Resource Center at **coramhc.com**.

SASH (SASH=S: Saline; A: Administration of Medication; S: Saline; H: Heparin).

This information is not a substitute for medical advice or treatment. Talk to your doctor or health care provider about this information and any health related questions you have. Coram assumes no liability whatsoever for the information provided or for any diagnosis or treatment made as a result of this information.

Your privacy is important to us. Our employees are trained regarding the appropriate way to handle your private health information.