

**PREVENTING IV INJURIES**

Keeping your child safe when they have an intravenous (IV) catheter is important to everyone at SickKids. Children stay safer when their parents are informed and involved in their care.

IV’s are an important part of your child’s care. They are used to deliver different types of:

- Fluids
- Medications
- Blood products

**WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP CARE FOR AN IV**

**Help protect the IV line**
Sometimes an IV can come out accidentally if it is bumped. Make sure the IV line does not get pulled when your child moves, such as when walking, playing, using the bathroom, and getting up from a bed or a chair. Ask a nurse if you need help managing the IV line.

**Speak with your child**
Ask your child to tell you if their IV hurts, or feels tingly or numb. Talk to them about not pulling the IV line and about asking you or the nurse to help them when they want to move.

**Keep the IV site dry**
The IV site should be kept dry at all times. This helps help prevent infection and accidental removal.

**WHAT YOUR NURSE WILL DO TO CARE FOR THE IV**

- Nurses will check the IV site at least once every hour, including throughout the night.
- Nurses will treat your child’s IV with TLC meaning they will:
  - **Touch**: for signs of temperature change and/or leakage
  - **Look**: to see that lines are dry and visible
  - **Compare**: for any signs of swelling by comparing to the opposite limb
- Nurses will try to minimize disruptions when your child is asleep (such as using a flashlight at night) but for safety reasons they must check the site even while your child is asleep.

**Keep the IV site visible (especially when your child is sleeping)**
This will make it easier for the nurse to check the IV without waking your child.

**Call your nurse if you notice:**

- Swelling
- Pain
- Numbness
- Redness
- Wetness
- Firmness
- Coolness or warmth at the site
- Bruising

Speak to your nurse if you have any questions or concerns about the IV.

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![Partners in Patient Safety](logo.png)

![SickKids](logo.png)

![caring safely](logo.png)
HOW YOU WILL KNOW IF YOUR CHILD’S IV IS NOT WORKING PROPERLY.
If an IV is not working properly, your child may experience any of the following symptoms:

- General pain and/or pain-to-touch at the IV site
- Swelling of the area where the IV is situated
- Numbness in the area
- Redness
- Bruising
- Wetness (suggesting that the IV is leaking)
- Firmness (may be related to swelling)
- Heat or coolness at the IV site

The hourly assessments done by nursing will assist in identifying if the IV is not working properly.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE IV STOPS WORKING?

- If the IV is not working, the fluid in the IV may leak into the surrounding tissues.
- Your child may experience some of the symptoms described above (pain, swelling etc.).
- The IV may need to be restarted if it is not working or if it is accidentally removed.
- In this situation, your child’s nurse and doctor will talk to you about a plan which may include restarting the IV.

If you have any other questions or concerns about your child’s IV, please speak to your nurse.

SPEAK UP AND ASK QUESTIONS. TALK TO YOUR HEALTH-CARE TEAM

- You know your child best. Speak up if you feel something’s not right or you have concerns about your child’s care.
- Give your health-care team an up-to-date description of your child’s health.
- Tell us about any treatments or surgeries by any other health-care professionals, including naturopaths or herbalists.
- Tell us about your child’s special physical, emotional or equipment needs or about any special aids like glasses or hearing aids.
- Share unique things about your child with caregivers that may be important for your child’s overall care (e.g. if they dislike loud noises or bright lights).
- Tell us if there are any changes in your child’s condition that concern you. You may notice things the health-care team doesn’t.