

What is an IV?

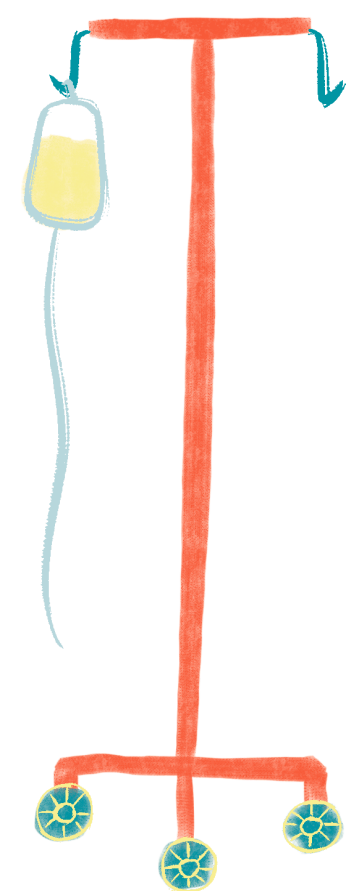
An IV is a soft, flexible tube that is put inside a vein usually in someone's hand or arm.

IV stands for intravenous: intra (in) venous (vein)

They are used to give medicine or fluids if a person needs it.

Getting an IV

- To put an IV in, the process is a lot like drawing blood.
- Whoever is putting the IV in will tie a tight plastic band (tourniquet) on your arm or wrist to make the vein plump up so it is easier to find and access.
- They will clean the skin with an alcohol swab to prevent infection.
- Then they will take a needle and give you a quick poke that may feel like a pinch. The flexible tube stays in the vein and the needle is taken out. You will not have a needle in your arm all the time if you have an IV.
- They will untie the tourniquet (tight string) and connect the tube in your vein to a longer tube connected to a bag of fluids.
- They will “flush” the IV which means letting the fluids flow from the bag into your vein to make sure the IV is in the right place.
- Then they will put a big band aid over the IV to keep it where it needs to be.



If you are nervous:

- Take long, deep breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth
- Distract yourself with music, a video, or a conversation
- You can ask if they have numbing spray or cream

IVs are placed all the time and there are very few complications.

However, every treatment comes with risks. The risks are getting a bruise (hematoma), an infection (this is prevented by cleaning the skin), a leak sometimes called infiltration (little bubble of fluid under the skin instead of in the vein), collapsed vein (if this happens they will find another vein for the IV and the other veins in the area will take over for the collapsed vein).

