



IV Placement and Removal

An IV (intravenous catheter) is a tiny, flexible tube inserted into a vein. It's used to give fluid or medicines.

How will I receive the IV?

When: If you're having surgery or another procedure, the IV will usually be placed before it starts. For children going to surgery, the IV may be placed after they go into the operating room and go to sleep.

Where: The IV will be placed in your hand or arm. The person who places the IV will decide the best location. A stretchy band will be placed around your hand or arm to help find the best vein.

How: A needle is used to put the IV into the vein. A nurse may numb the IV site with some medicine to make it sting less. Once the IV is in place, the needle is taken out and only a flexible plastic tube stays in the vein.

What should I expect about IV placement?

- You must stay as still as possible while the IV is being placed.
- Placing the IV may take 5 to 10 minutes from start to finish.
- Although our nurses are well trained, everyone's veins are different. It sometimes takes more than one try to get the IV in place.
- When the medicine or fluid goes through the tube, it may feel cool.
- If your IV comes out of the vein because of movement or activity, it may need to be replaced.



Will my IV cause problems?

Not usually. Once the IV is in place, the area may become a little irritated or swollen, though. This is called **phlebitis**. Tell your nurse if this happens. For most people, phlebitis is not serious. The nurse can usually make it feel better by putting a warm compress or blanket on the site.

If a vein becomes more irritated or medicine leaks out of the vein, the nurse will check the IV site often for redness, swelling, and pain. **If your IV is uncomfortable, be sure to tell your nurse.**

What should I expect about IV removal?

- When the IV is taken out, you may not even feel it. Sometimes the tape pulls the skin and hair, and it hurts a little.
- The IV site may bleed a little and will be wrapped or bandaged after it is removed. Some people get a bruise at the site. This will get better over time without treatment.
- The site may feel sore for several days.

Be sure to ask your healthcare providers if you have any questions or concerns.

Questions for my doctor

Notes

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