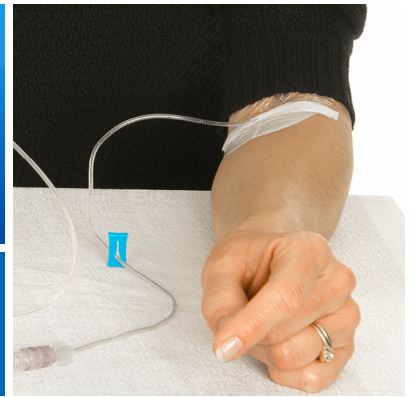


Taking an intravenous antibiotic at home



Your doctor has prescribed an antibiotic for you to take at home. You'll need to take it through a vein into which a tube has been placed. Here's what you need to do and watch for during this treatment.

What is the purpose of this treatment?

The goal is to eliminate the bacteria that are causing the infection you have.

Why do I need to take my antibiotic through a vein?

There may be different reasons. Your doctor will suggest the best treatment depending on the severity of the infection, the type of bacteria causing it, and your health status.

In some cases, taking antibiotic tablets by mouth is simply not possible.

If you have any questions about this, talk to your doctor.

What are the steps to follow?

ASSESSMENT

First your care team needs to assess whether you can receive this treatment.

Here are the conditions that need to be met.

You need to live in a place where :

- 1 the pharmacy can deliver the antibiotics to you
- 2 there is a refrigerator in good condition to store them
- 3 there is a sink and soap so you can wash your hands

Also, you must have a telephone number where you can be reached at all times. In fact, you need to be able to adjust your treatment quickly based on your test results.

If any of these conditions change during the course of your treatment, you must notify your health care team without fail. This is important for your safety. The contact information is provided at the end of this fact sheet.



INSTALLATION OF A CENTRAL VENOUS CATHETER

A tube is inserted into a vein in your arm. This tube will allow you to inject the treatment. Before you leave the hospital, you'll be told how to use it.

Once the catheter is in place, you should avoid making sudden movements and lifting heavy objects.

See also the fact sheet [*Insertion of a central venous catheter or PICC line.*](#)

A nurse from your CLSC may come to your home to perform maintenance on the catheter.



ANTIBIOTIC TREATMENT

The treatment is tailored to your case. Be sure to follow your doctor's instructions for taking the antibiotic properly, which means taking:

- the full dose
- the right number of times a day
- for the full prescribed period of time

FOLLOW-UP

You will normally have follow-up appointments every 1 or 2 weeks to:

- assess whether the treatment is working
- check that it's not causing any significant side effects



FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENT

Date :

Time :

Place : **CHUM Home Intravenous Antibiotic Therapy (IVAT) Clinic, C Pavilion, 3rd floor.**

CATHETER REMOVAL

At the end of the treatment, the catheter will be removed by a nurse in the CHUM medical day clinic or a CLSC nurse.

How do I take the antibiotic?

Depending on the antibiotic prescribed, you'll have to use **one or another** of the following 3 systems. In all cases, the antibiotic is liquid.

Each of these systems must be connected to the catheter.

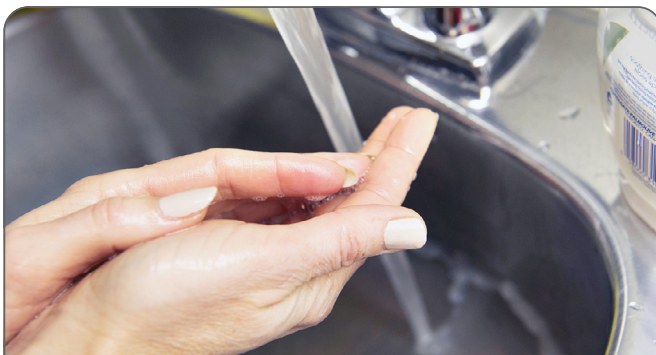


> **Portable infuser** ("bottle"). The antibiotic is contained in a small pressurized balloon in the center of a bottle. The balloon empties slowly as the antibiotic passes through the catheter.

> **Programmable pump.** The antibiotic is in a bag connected to the pump. The pump remains connected to the catheter 24 hours a day. It can be programmed to give the antibiotic only at certain times or continuously.

> **Syringe (without needle).** This system is used less often. The syringe contains one dose of antibiotic. You just have to press the plunger to make it go through the catheter.

These systems are easy to use. Most patients are able to take their antibiotic on their own.



Reminder

Always wash your hands before handling your catheter.

Can I take a shower or bath during my treatment?

Yes, but you need to take the following precautions.

- > Cover your catheter with a dry washcloth and then put plastic wrap (such as *Saran Wrap*) over it.
- > Place adhesive tape designed for skin around the edges of the plastic wrap to secure it and prevent water from entering.
- > Don't direct the shower jet onto the plastic wrap.
- > Don't dip your arm in the bath water.
- > If you use an infuser or pump, remove it

before getting into the shower or bath.

Important: do this **between 2 doses**. Don't disconnect your system while a dose is being injected or if you're supposed to take another dose within a few minutes. **Check with the nurse first** to see if it's safe for you to disconnect the pump or infuser.

- > If you can't take the precautions above, it's recommended that you wash yourself with a washcloth.

Will the treatment work quickly?

You should feel better day by day.

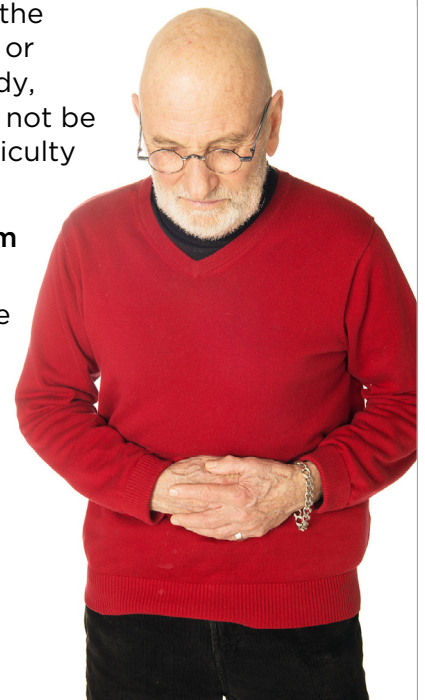
Your symptoms of infection (fever, pain, rash, or other symptoms) should go away before the treatment is finished. **If they return, tell your care team right away.**

What signs should I watch for?

It's normal for this treatment to cause diarrhea. Don't worry if your stools are softer.

However, call a CHUM nurse right away (contact information on page 4) :

- > **if you have any of the following signs:**
 - more than 3 loose stools a day (a sign of severe diarrhea)
 - nausea or vomiting
 - muscle pain
 - signs of allergy to the antibiotic: redness or pimples on the body, which may or may not be itchy, swelling, difficulty breathing
- > **if you have a problem with your catheter:**
 - the skin around the catheter is very tender, swollen, or red



- fluid is leaking from the skin where the catheter enters
- you have trouble taking the full dose of antibiotic: the catheter may be blocked and a professional should check it

> Other signs that your health professional has asked you to watch for:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Who can I contact if I have questions?

For any question related to **your health**, you can call a CHUM nurse:

> 514 890-8086

This service is available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. When calling, be sure to have your health insurance (RAMQ) card on hand.

Who do I contact to change an appointment?

If you need to change the date or time of a follow-up appointment, please call right away the CHUM Home Intravenous Antibiotic Therapy (IVAT) Clinic:

> 514 890-8370

During the day, between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.



USEFUL RESOURCES

Other health sheets published by the CHUM are available. Ask for those that might fit your situation.



You can also find them on our website chumontreal.qc.ca/fiches-sante



NOTEPAD



Questions

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



Resource people and contacts

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

The content of this document in no way replaces the recommendations and diagnoses made, or the treatment suggested by your health professional.

To find out more about the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal chumontreal.qc.ca

