
CHAPTER 18: DURABLE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

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18.2.26 Intravenous (IV) Therapy and Administrative Supplies

Intravenous (IV) therapy is a way of taking medicine so that it flows straight into the bloodstream.

IV medicines are given through flexible plastic tubes that are inserted into a vein, usually in the arm or the chest.

Medication that is given through an IV may be given with a syringe as a single dose (push), from a bag that is attached to the end of the tube (gravity infusion) or with a pump.

IV medication is used instead of medicine that is taken orally (by mouth) when:

1. An oral form of the medication is not available;
2. IV medication will be more effective than oral medicine per the prescribing physician; and/or
3. Beneficiary is unable to take medication by mouth.

Some of the different devices that are used to give IV medicines are:

1. Cannulas;
2. Central lines, (Hickman's catheter);
3. Picc (Peripheral Intravenous Central Catheter) lines; and
4. Portacaths® (Infuse-a-port®, Mediport®).

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18.2.26.1 Syringes and Needles

Syringes and needles are covered only for intravenous therapy (IV) therapy, intramuscular (IM) injections, subcutaneous (Sub Q) injections, for dialysis purposes when used to inject heparin into the dialysis system, and for wound care.

Documentation must show that a home health agency is administering and/or monitoring the administration of IV therapy provided in the home in order for these supplies to be approved.

NOTE: Insulin syringes are not covered in the Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics and Supplies (DMEPOS) program, but are covered in the Pharmacy program. Syringes are not separately reimbursable for enteral and parenteral therapy, as these items are included in the supply kits.