

A Guide to Subcutaneous Fluid Administration

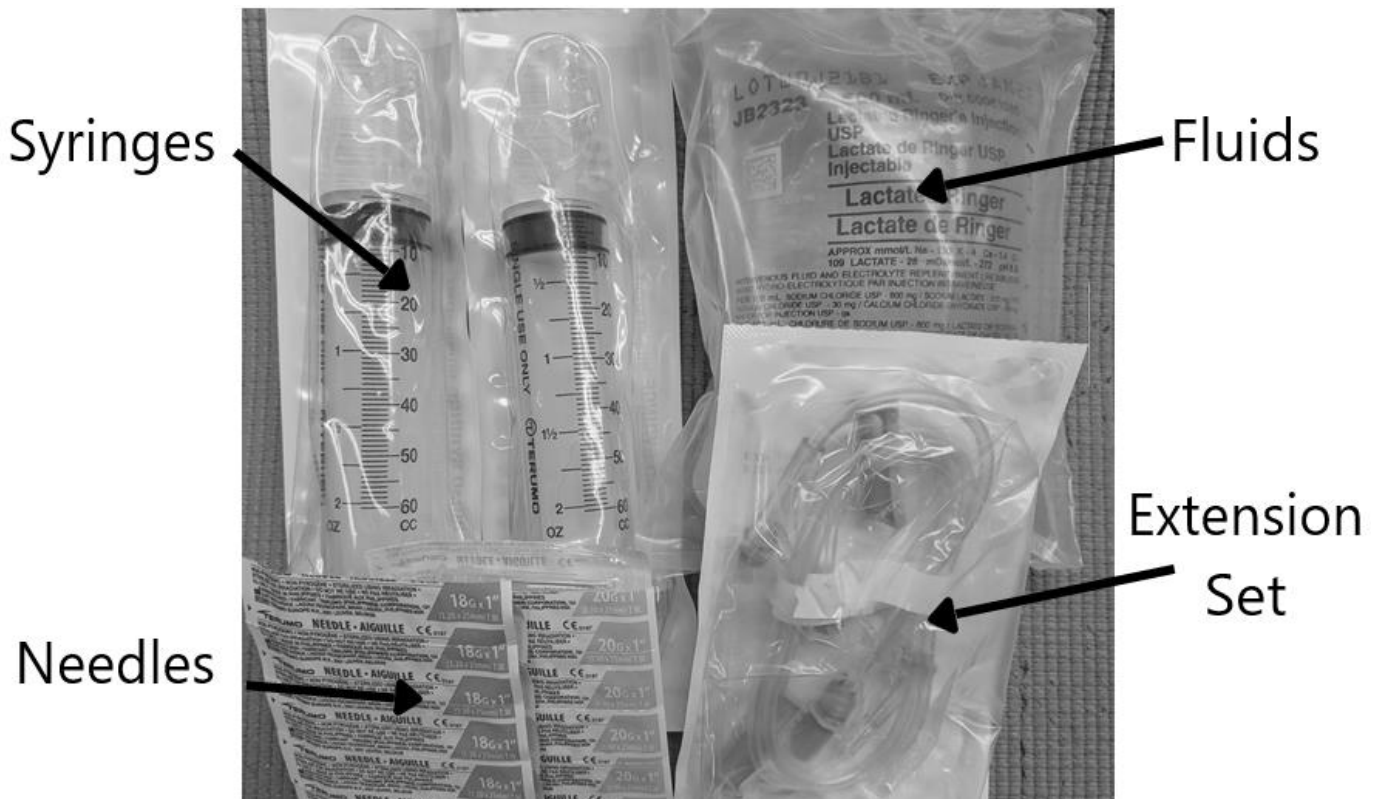
OVERVIEW

If you are feeling a little uncomfortable giving fluid to your pet, don't worry. That is a normal reaction. Administering fluids is not as complicated as it sounds, and this guide will walk you through the process step by step. Please read through this guide before you start.

STEP 1 - YOUR ADMINISTRATION KIT

Your kit contains:

- Four 500ml bags of sterile electrolyte fluids. These should be stored at room temperature for the comfort of your pet.
- Two fluid extension sets. This is the length of clear tubing that attaches to a syringe.
- Four 60ml syringes
- Pink (18 gauge) needles
- Yellow (20 gauge) needles



All of your fluid kit items are in sterile packages, and appropriate handling ensures they remain as clean as possible. Some tips on safe handling:

- The syringes' tips, the connection ends of the extension set, the needles, and the fluids inside the bag should not be touched or be allowed to touch any non-sterile surface.
- Always keep clean needles on the syringes. If a needle is dropped or touches a surface (counter, table etc.), it should be replaced.
- Always use new needles when drawing fluid out of the bag. Reusing a needle can contaminate your fluids. This can, in turn, contaminate your whole kit, resulting in the need to replace it.

STEP 2 - PREPARE FOR ADMINISTRATION

Start by choosing a location where you are able to handle your pet, and that they feel comfortable in. This can be a table, or a countertop, or even the floor, as long as you have somewhere clean to set up your supplies. This area should be as distraction-free as possible.

The process should take between 5 and 10 minutes. Once you have chosen a location, you can begin to assemble and set up the items from your kit that you will need.

STEP 3 - ASSEMBLE YOUR SUPPLIES

- Wash your hands thoroughly
- Remove the fluid bag from the plastic wrapper and set it aside
- Remove one syringe from the plastic wrap and attach a pink 18 gauge needle to it. To keep the syringe as clean as possible, do not let the tip of it touch your hands, or the surface before attaching the needle.
- Open the fluid extension set and the second syringe.
- Remove the blue cap from the winged end of the extension set and attach this end to the syringe. Remove the blue cap from the other end, and attach a pink 18 gauge needle to it.
- To fill the syringes, insert the needle into the bag through the rubber port at the bottom of the bag and draw up the amount of fluids recommended.
- After filling the syringes, replace the needle on the extension set with a yellow 20 gauge needle.

If you get large air bubbles in the syringes, you can disconnect the needle, and push the air out. If you need to remove the extension set from the syringe, kink the line first.



STEP 4 - WHAT TO EXPECT

Most pets tolerate this procedure very well. However, if fluids are too cold, it can be uncomfortable for the pet. This is why we recommend you store fluids at room temperature. Please do not refrigerate the fluids.

As the fluids are administered, they will accumulate under the skin and form a bump. This bump will gradually disappear as the fluids are absorbed by your pet over the next 2 - 4 hours. The fluids may migrate down towards the elbows. This is just due to gravity. They will still be absorbed.

If you have a wriggly pet, it might be best to have someone help you while you administer the fluids. They can gently hold, or distract your pet.

If you notice during the administration that the bump is becoming firm, or the skin over the bump is getting tight, you should remove the needle and choose a new location. Make sure to replace the needle before starting administration in the new location.

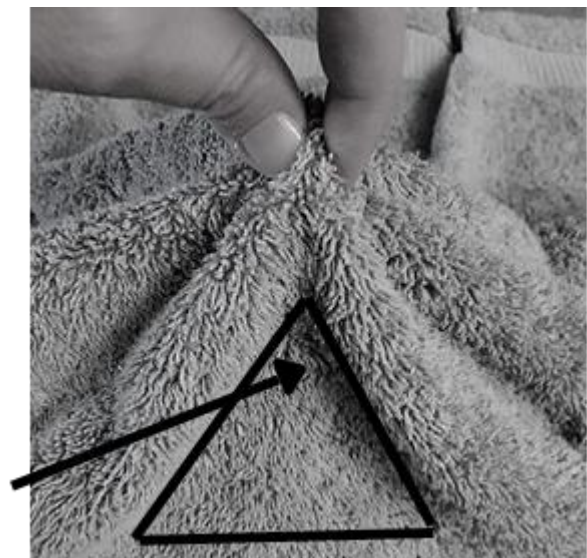
After the fluids have been administered, you may notice a small amount of blood mixed with the fluids leaking from the administration site. This is normal. Gently pinch or press the site to help stop the leaking.

If you notice that your pet is becoming irritated while the fluids are being administered, try giving them at a slower rate.

STEP 5 - INSERTING THE NEEDLE

The most common area for fluid administration for cats is in the loose skin over the shoulders. This area can also work well for dogs, but because they tend to have less loose skin than cats, you may need to use multiple sites. The loose skin over the hip often allows for fluid administration. This can vary, so choose the site with the most excess skin.

- Pinch a roll of loose skin to form a 'skin tent'
This is the roughly triangular flap of skin formed between your fingers and the body of your pet. It looks roughly like the photo below. The towel was used due to the ease of identifying the shape.
- Steady your hand on the back of the pet, and guide the needle to the insertion point



and advance the needle smoothly forwards. The tip of the needle should be in the middle of the roll, just under your fingertips when inserted.

- To check for proper placement, you can draw back gently on the plunger of the syringe. If you are met with resistance - Congrats! you placed it correctly! If you get a large amount of air being drawn into the extension set, the needle has gone through both sides of the tent. Remove the needle and try again.
- Release the skin tent and hold the needle in place with one hand.
- With the other hand, set the syringe vertically on the countertop or other surface, with the flat bottom of the plunger down.
- Apply firm downward pressure to the barrel of the syringe until the syringe is empty.
- Leaving the needle in the skin (provided the bump is not becoming firm or the skin too tight), kink the extension set and disconnect the empty syringe and attach a needle to it. Attach the full syringe to the extension set. Do not allow syringe tips to touch the countertop or your hands
- Administer the second syringe of fluids.
- When complete, smoothly draw the needle straight out of the skin and gently pinch or press the insertion site.

FAQ's

Do I need to sterilize the skin with alcohol before inserting the needle?

- 🐾 No. Wiping the skin with alcohol may actually cause your pet to become more upset due to the smell and feel of the alcohol on the skin.

What if air bubbles are carried under the skin?

- 🐾 A few small air bubbles are not going to cause problems for your pet. However, if quite a bit of air gets under the skin, you may feel some crackling when you push on the skin. This may cause your pet some mild discomfort for a few hours but will cause no real harm.

How can I avoid getting air under the skin?

- 🐾 To avoid injecting air under the skin, you can disconnect the needle from the syringe or kink the extension set, disconnect it from the syringe, and push the air out. Always ensure the extension set is filled with fluids before beginning the administration. A good way to do this is to draw the fluids into the syringe through the extension set.

How much do I give?

- 🐾 Your veterinarian will determine in advance the volume of fluid you should administer and how often. The average size cat usually receives 100 - 180mls at one time. The amount given will vary depending on many factors like size, and level of dehydration.





3888 Carey Road
Victoria BC V8Z 4C9

How often should I replace the parts of my kit?

- 🐾 Syringes and extension sets should be replaced weekly if fluids are given daily. Needles should only be used once to limit the chances of contaminating the fluids or the equipment.

I've used the same bag for several treatments, and now it is cloudy. What does this mean?

- 🐾 If the fluids become cloudy or discoloured, do not use them. It usually means that fluids have become contaminated with bacteria, and administering these fluids risks causing an infection under the skin. If your fluids become contaminated, then the whole kit, except for unopened needles, should be replaced.

Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns, or you need to replace your kit.



250-727-2125



contact.us@mckvets.com