

Syringe pumps

A syringe pump is a small battery powered pump. It delivers a continuous flow of medication through a thin tube and a small needleless catheter sitting just beneath the surface of the skin.

How does the pump work?

The syringe pump has a battery driven motor which very slowly pushes the syringe plunger to administer the medication via the tube and through a needleless catheter under the skin.

You should not feel this as only a tiny amount of fluid is delivered each time the plunger moves.

A green flashing light on the front of the syringe pump above the grey on/off button lets you know the pump is working correctly.

The nurses will refill the syringe pump daily using the medications which have been prescribed for you and provided by the hospital or pharmacy.

The machine can be placed into a small bag which can be positioned over your shoulder, or around your waist, so that you can move around while you have the pump in place.

Or a pillowcase if you are in bed The needleless catheter is held in place with a clear dressing and is designed to be left in place for a number of days..

The site will be reviewed daily and the needleless catheter changed when needed e.g redness, pain or swelling at the site.

Once in place it should be painless, please let your nurse know if you do experience any discomfort or pain.

Why do I need a pump?

A pump would be needed when...

- you have multiple and repeated injections to manage my symptoms (pain ,sickness etc)
- you're unable to take medicines by mouth (e.g. Problems swallowing)
- medicines taken by mouth are not being absorbed properly.



Special instructions to be aware of

Do not get the syringe pump wet- water and steam can damage the working parts of the pump, please talk to the nurse if this happens. Be aware of where the tubing and pump are positioned, avoid sitting or lying on the tubing or pump as this can cause pressure damage to your skin or cause the pump to alarm.

Keep the pump out of direct sunlight and do not allow it to get too hot. Do not place it under pillows as the alarm cannot be heard.

How will I know if the syringe pump is working?

If the pump is working normally a green light next to the on/off button will flash twice a minute.

For your safety there are a number of built in alerts and alarms, if one of these are triggered the green light may change to yellow or red.

What alert or alarm sounds might I hear?

The alert is triggered

- Near the end of the infusion
- Near the end of the battery

The alarm will sound

- If the line becomes occluded (needleless catheter or line is kinked or blocked)
- If the syringe becomes dislodged
- If the battery has run too low
- If the infusion has completed

If it does alarm and the nurse is not present please contact your nurse or out of hours service.

You can turn the alarm off by pressing the green button once. Do NOT press any other buttons.

Contact your nurse if

- Your pump alarms
- Your pump becomes damaged
- The green light is not flashing
- If the site becomes red, uncomfortable or painful
- The dressing at the site becomes loose
- The needleless cannula comes out

Contact number for your nursing team to support you with your syringe pump

- Team name and hours of work:
- Contact number:
- Out of hours contact number:

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