

Kearny Mesa Veterinary Center

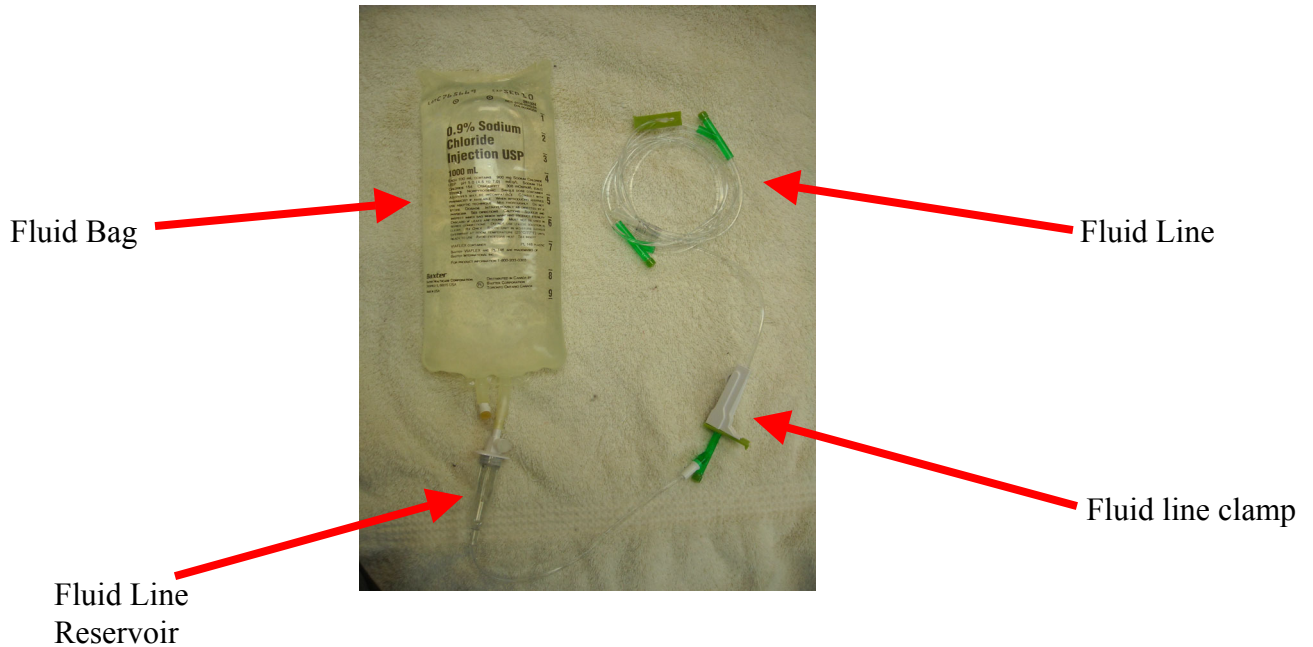
Quality – Compassion – Experience

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Administering Subcutaneous Fluids

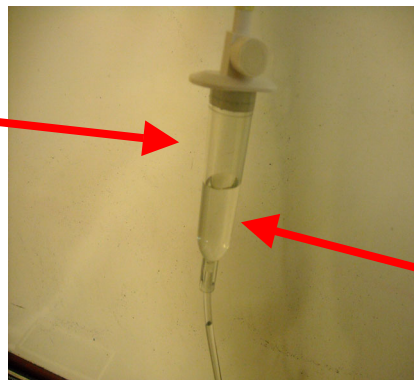
FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE DIFFERENT PARTS:



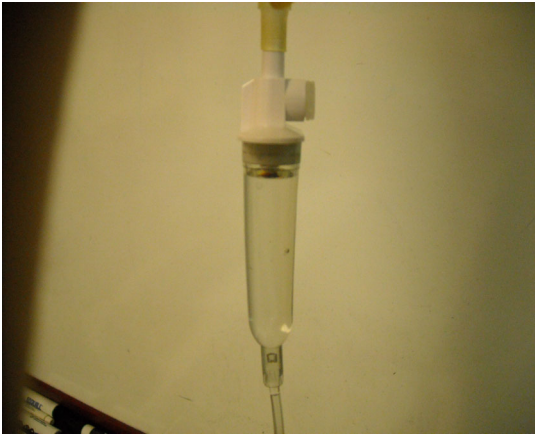
When receiving the fluids, the line will already be connected to the fluid bag and the line will have been “bled” for you, meaning the line is already filled with fluid from the fluid bag.

The fluid line reservoir serves as an indicator that shows the line has fluid in it. It is also the area that will be observed when administering the fluids to show that the fluids are actually flowing. You will see liquid fall from the bag and into the fluid reservoir.

Half of the reservoir should be filled with air. This will allow you to see fluids flowing.



The other half of the reservoir should be filled with fluid, indicating the line has been bled through with fluids.



If the fluid reservoir becomes overfull with fluids, you will be unable to see the fluids running from the bag into the reservoir, preventing you from knowing if fluids are actually being administered.



Should this occur, invert the bag and give the reservoir a few squeezes to push some fluid out of the reservoir. Reorient the bag. It should now be only half full with fluids.

The administration of the fluids is easily controlled by a simple clamp along the line of the fluids. When the roller is down (rolled away from the bag) the line is clamped and no fluids will flow from the bag. When the roller is up (rolled towards the fluid bag) the line is unclamped and fluids will flow uninhibited.



CLAMPED



UNCLAMPED

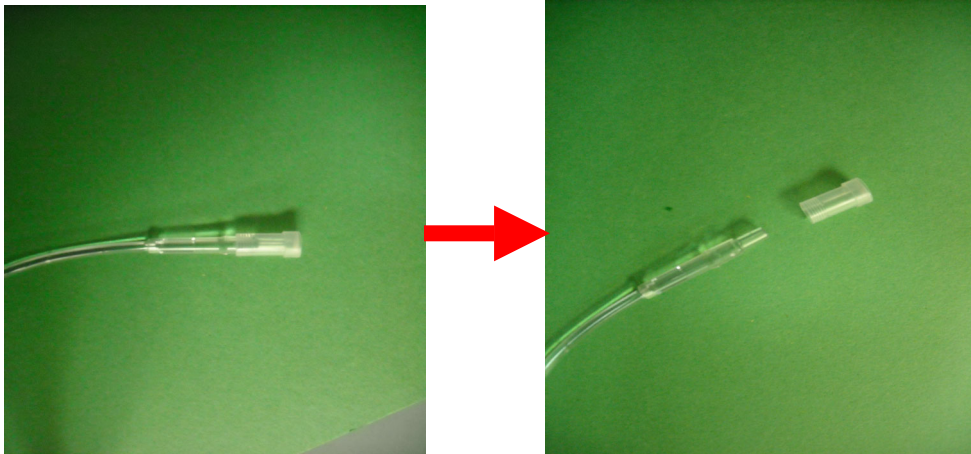
PREPARE TO ADMINISTER FLUIDS TO YOUR ANIMAL:

The administration of fluids is done through a large gauge needle attached to the end of the fluid line. The needle must first be attached to the fluid line before fluids can be administered.

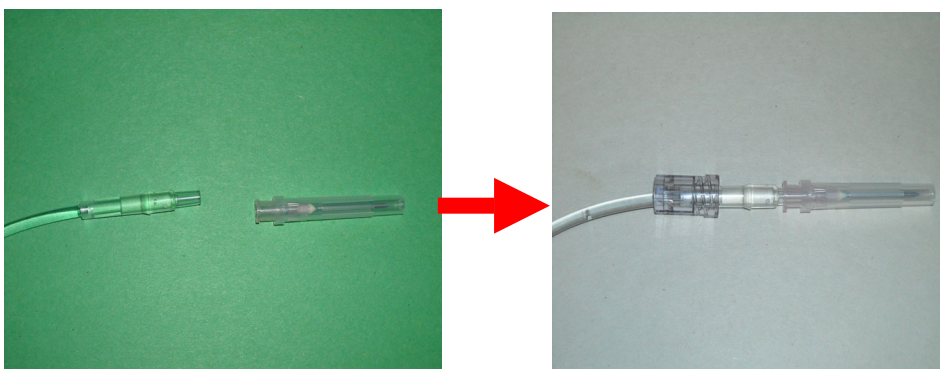
First, remove the needle from the wrapper. Avoid touching the opening of the bottom of the needle:



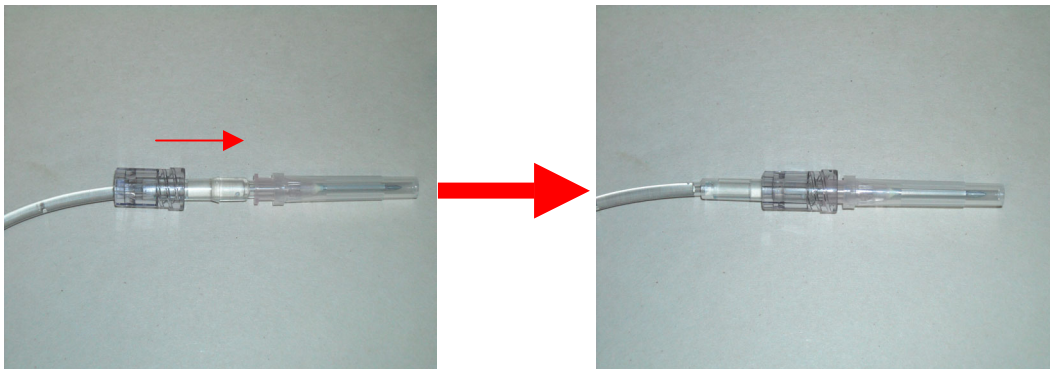
Second, remove the cap from the end of the fluid line. Avoid touching the end of the line or allowing the line to touch anything:



Third, attach the end of the fluid line into the bottom of the needle:



Now, secure the needle to the line by securing the threaded lock into place over the bottom of the needle:



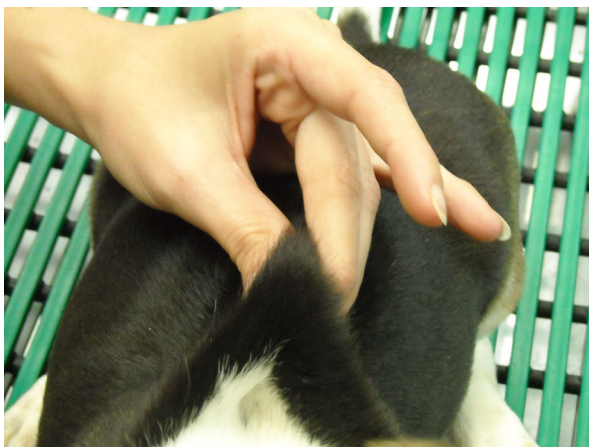
Lastly, hang the bag by the small hole at the top of the bag.

The fluids are administered by gravity, therefore, it is advantageous to hang the bag as high up as possible, and have your animal positioned as low as possible.

ADMINISTER FLUIDS TO YOUR ANIMAL:

Loose areas of skin are the best places to administer fluids to your animal. Most of the time, this area is near the scruff, over or between the shoulder blades.

First, use your thumb and middle finger to pinch up a loose area of skin:



Second, with your pointer finger, push the skin inward towards your other two fingers, forming an indentation in the pinched up skin:

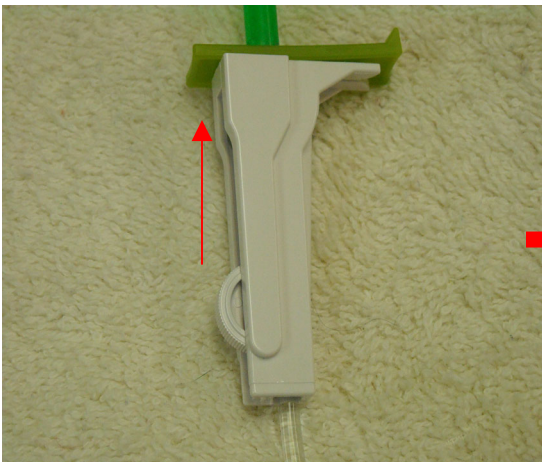


Third, remove the cap from the needle. The needle should be inserted just below your pointer finger so that it enters the subcutaneous space created by your thumb and middle finger.

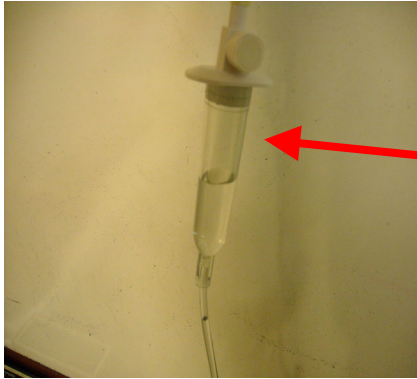


When the needle is in place, the skin can be released. The hand holding the needle should remain to hold down the needle against the animal to ensure the needle stays in place, even if the animal moves.

Next, unclamp the fluid line:

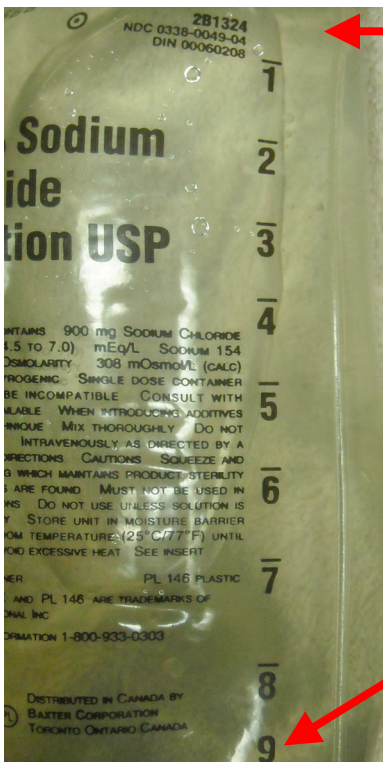


You should now see fluids flowing from the bag into the reservoir. If it appears as though the fluids are flowing too slowly, you can squeeze the bag to push fluids through the line faster.



A constant stream of fluids should be observed flowing in this space.

The bag will serve as an indicator showing how much fluids have been administered:

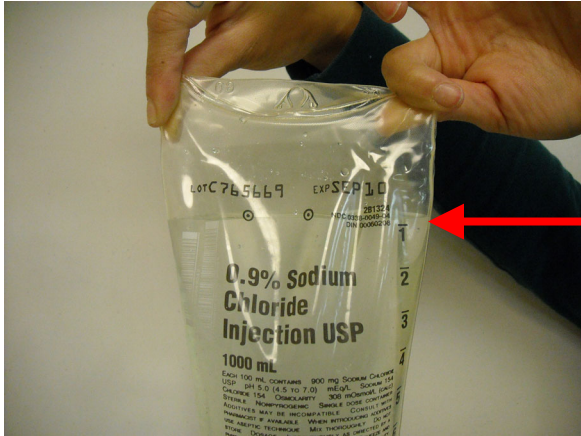


There are a total of 1000 ml (1 liter) of fluids in a full bag. On a full fluid bag, the fluids are filled to about here, a few centimeters above the “1” indicator. When the fluids reach the “1” line, that indicates that 100 ml of fluids have been given. Each number line below that indicates 100 ml more of fluids.

When the fluid level reaches the “9” indicator, 100 ml of fluids remains in the bag.

Administer the amount of fluids as directed by a veterinarian, keeping in mind that each number level corresponds to 100 ml of fluids.

To obtain an accurate view of the amount of fluids left in the bag, stretch out the top corners of the bag. This will level out the fluids, showing you how much is in the bag.

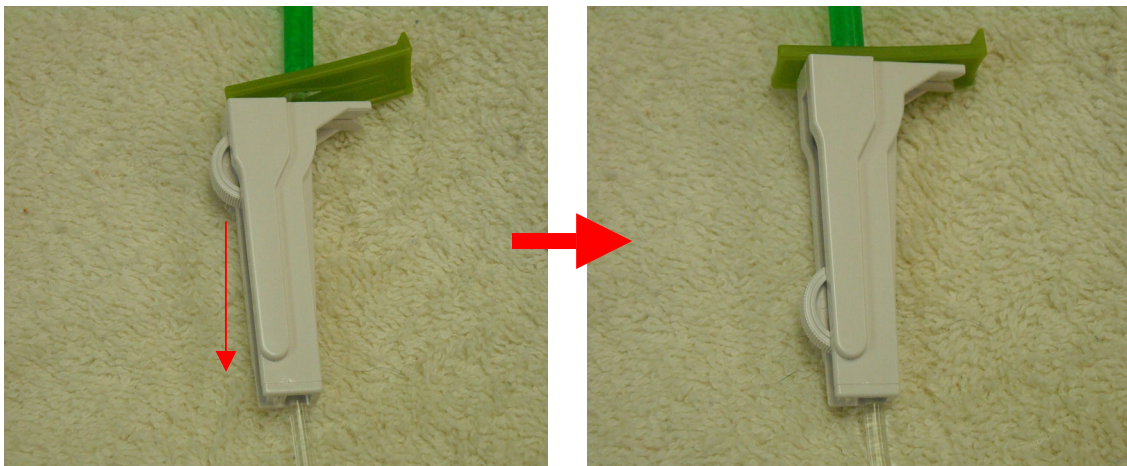


The fluid level can be easily seen as the top of the bag is stretched.

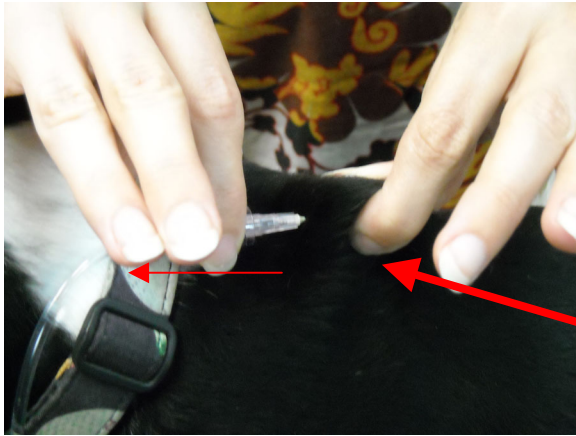
As the fluids are administered, they will pool underneath your animal's skin, creating a large hump in the area. Pay attention to the firmness of the pocket of fluids. If the area appears to be getting too firm, it may be necessary to move to a different location on your animal to administer the remainder of the fluids.

AFTER THE FLUIDS HAVE BEEN ADMINISTERED:

Once the prescribed amount of fluids have been administered to your animal, stop the flow of fluids by clamping off the line using the rolling clamp:



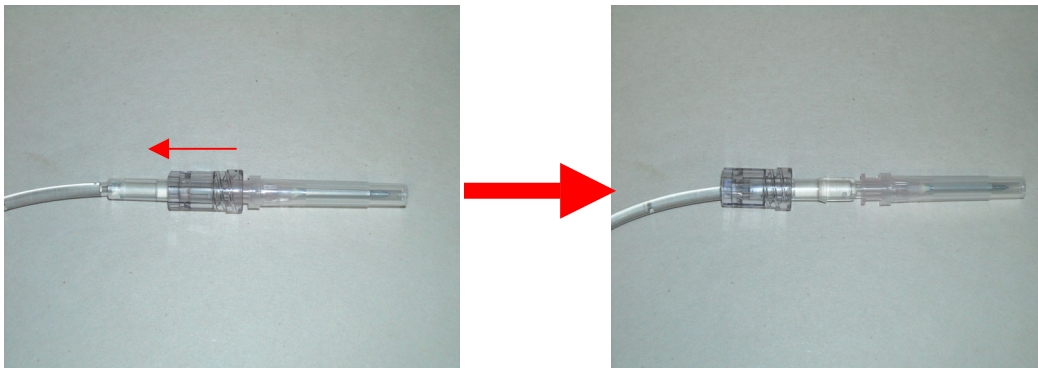
Pinch off the area of skin where the needle is inserted, then in one continuous motion, pull the needle out:



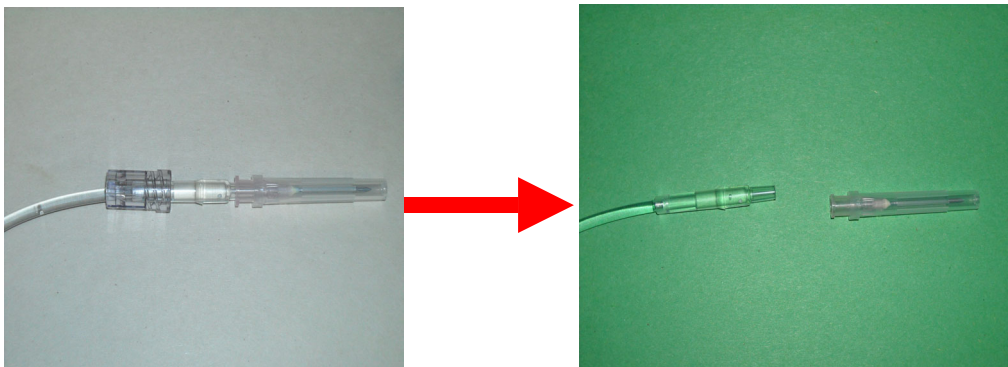
As a larger gauge needle is being used, some fluids can escape the injection site once the needle is pulled out. Typically, these fluids will contain a small amount of blood and will be red in color. This is perfectly normal, but can be somewhat messy. To avoid this, pinch the area where the needle was placed as the needle is removed. You may also want to lift up the pinched skin and shake the area to move the fluids away from the injection site. Again, it is not a problem if fluids come back out, and hydrogen peroxide can be used to clean any areas that become messy due to this.

After the needle is removed, the cap should be replaced, and the needle should be removed from the fluid line:

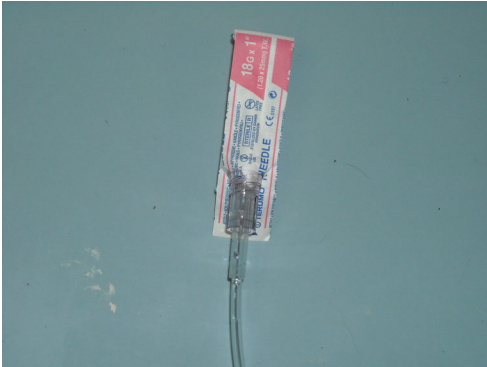
Unlock the needle from the fluid line:



Remove the needle from the fluid line:



Replace a new needle to the fluid line to be used next time fluids are given. When you place a new needle on the line, keep the wrapper on the needle as a reminder that the needle is fresh and does not need replacement before the next administration of fluids:



WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER YOUR ANIMAL HAS RECEIVED FLUIDS:

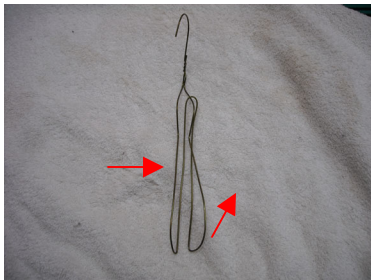
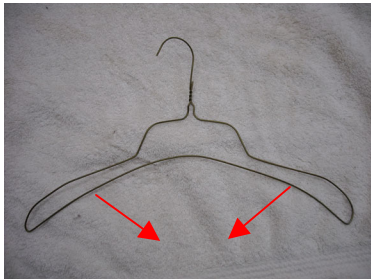
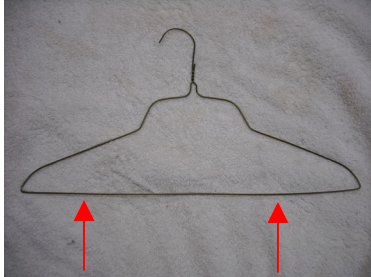
After your animal has received its fluids, a large hump where the fluids were given will remain for up to 6 – 8 hours after administration. As the fluids are absorbed into the system, this hump will decrease in size.

It is normal to see some leaking of the fluids from the injection site for as much as 1 – 2 hours after the fluids are given. Typically, these fluids will appear to have some blood in them. This too is normal. Pinching the skin and shaking the injection site when the needle is removed will help to reduce this.

It is not uncommon to see your animal's feet begin to swell a few hours after administering the fluids. This is perfectly normal and is simply the result of gravity pulling the fluids down towards the ground. As the fluids are absorbed, this swelling will disappear.

ONE LAST CLEVER IDEA:

Many find it difficult to locate an area where the fluids can effectively be hanged. As the fluid administration works by gravity, finding a high place is required, yet can be tricky to locate a spot high enough. A coat hanger can be easily folded into a makeshift hook that can be placed anywhere to allow the fluids to be hung on a high level:



Hook the fluid bag to this end to administer the fluids to your animal.

Hook this end to any secure high area – a shower curtain rod is a readily available option..