

Flushing Your Catheter (SASH Protocol)



We use the letters “SASH” to help you remember the order for flushing your catheter (steps 6–9).

1. **Refer** to your Patient Resource Guide and medication label. They can provide details on how to handle and store medication.
2. **Clean** your work area.
3. **Wash** your hands. Using soap and water, rub your hands for 20 seconds. Remove any dirt from under your nails. Dry your hands with a paper towel or clean (unused) hand towel. If you do not have access to soap and water, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
4. **Gather** your supplies:
 - 2 pre-filled saline syringes (sodium chloride)
 - 1 pre-filled heparin syringe
 - Antiseptic wipes
5. **Inspect** the medication and label for the following:
 - Correct name
 - Expiration date
 - How clear the solution is
6. **(S) Saline** flush:
 - a. Open the clamp on the IV catheter and/or extension set.
 - b. Remove the cap from the saline syringe.
 - c. Remove any air from the syringe. Hold the syringe up and gently pull back on the plunger. Then push in the plunger until all air is removed. The tip of the syringe is sterile, so do not let it touch non-sterile surfaces.
 - d. Scrub the injection cap with an antiseptic wipe for 15 seconds.
 - e. Attach the saline syringe to the injection cap. Do this by pushing the syringe and twisting it clockwise until secure.
 - f. Push in the syringe plunger to flush the catheter with the amount of saline ordered.
 - g. Remove the syringe from the injection cap.
7. **(A) Administer** the medication as directed by your clinician.

8. **(S)** Saline flush (repeat Step 6).
9. **(H)** Heparin flush, if ordered:
 - a. Remove the cap from the heparin syringe.
 - b. Remove any air from the syringe. Hold the syringe up and gently pull back on the plunger. Then push in the plunger until all air is removed. The tip of the syringe is sterile, so do not let it touch non-sterile surfaces.
 - c. Scrub the injection cap with an alcohol wipe for 15 seconds.
 - d. Attach the heparin syringe to the injection cap. Do this by pushing the syringe and twisting it clockwise until secure.
 - e. Push on the syringe plunger to flush the catheter with the amount of heparin ordered.
 - f. Remove the syringe from the injection cap.
 - g. Clamp the catheter and/or extension set.

Note: *You may be using a neutral or negative displacement injection cap. If so, your clinician will tell you to clamp your catheter **BEFORE** you remove the syringe.*

Tips / Reminders:

- If you find it hard to push in the plunger while flushing, make sure all clamps are open.
- Do not force a flush. If you have pain, burning or swelling when flushing, stop and call your clinician.
- Do not reuse any syringe.
- If you have a double-lumen catheter, flush it as directed by your clinician.