



A Paradigm Shift for IV Push Safety

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Summary: The use of IV push medications, especially in med-surg settings, has grown considerably. The Institute for Safe Medication Practice (ISMP) identified widespread dilution of IV push medications, including prepared syringes, as an unnecessary practice leading to unlabeled or mislabeled syringes, potential contamination of sterile IV medications, dosing errors, and other types of drug administration errors. Subsequently, the ISMP held a summit on adult IV push medication safety and published a set of guidelines in 2015. Nursing practices are highly variable and may be sabotaging patient safety by diluting IV push medications at the bedside.

Nursing Implications:

- Nursing references for IV push medication preparation and administration need to be updated to reflect current best practices.
- Nursing practices for IV push medication preparation and administration need to be defined and standardized.
- Nurses must stop using prefilled saline syringes to dilute or reconstitute IV push medications.

Key Takeaways:

- Dilution of IV push medications by nurses is no longer recommended.
- IV push medications may be safely given using the saline-administer-saline method (SAS).
- Prefilled saline flush syringes are not approved by the FDA for dilution/reconstitution of medications.

Link: <https://library.amsn.org/amsn/sessions/4261/view>

References:

Institute for Safe Medication Practices. Safe practice guidelines for adult IV push medications. ISMP Web site. 2015.
<https://www.ismp.org/Tools/guidelines/IVSummitPush/IVPushMedGuidelines.pdf>

Hertig J, Degnan D, Scott C. A Comparison of Error Rates Between Intravenous Push Methods: A Prospective, Multisite, Observational Study. J Patient Saf. 2017;00: 00–00 (published on-line).

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