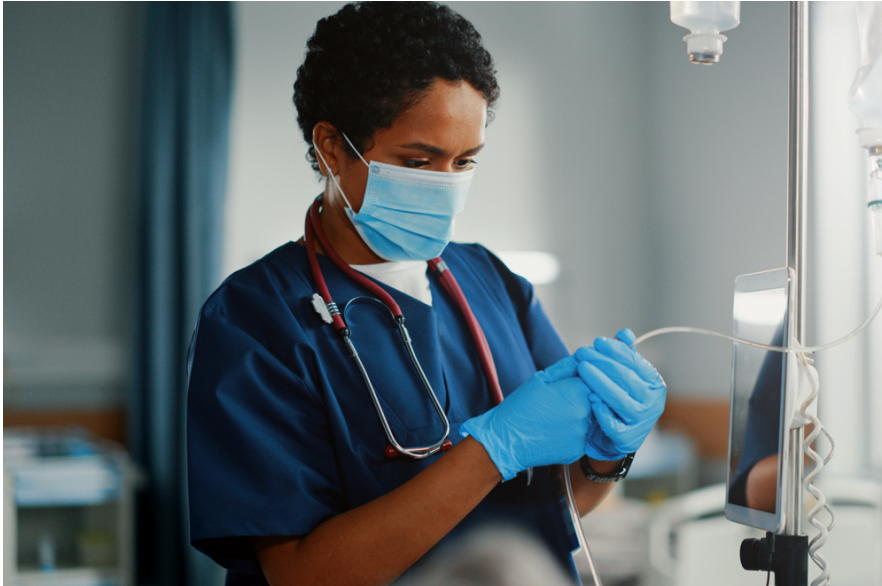




## What's the Purpose of an IV?



### Overview

If you've ever been a hospital patient, you've probably been hooked to an intravenous line. We call it an "IV." It sends fluid into your bloodstream. But what's the purpose of an IV, exactly? Let's take a moment to learn more.

### The basics

First, let's look at a typical IV setup. One end of the IV goes into a vein. Most commonly, we use a vein in the back of your hand. To place the IV line, we feed it into the vein through a needle. Then we remove the needle and secure the line with tape. The other end of the IV is attached to a bag of fluid. The fluid slowly drips into the IV tube and flows into your body.

### Why do we need IV fluid?

So, why do you need this fluid? Well, it's easy to become dehydrated when you're in a hospital. That's especially true for surgery patients. You may be medicated. You may be sleeping more than you normally would. And you may not realize when you aren't drinking enough fluid. So an IV keeps fluid flowing into your body. It keeps you from getting dehydrated.

### What's in the fluid?

What's in the fluid? Well, that depends on what your body needs. Most commonly, you get a mixture of salt and water (called "saline") or a sugar water mix. There are other fluid mixes, too. And, we may also give you medicine through your IV line.

### Conclusion

For more info about IV fluids and why you need them, talk to your doctor.