



Rx Update

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NIFEDIPINE ORAL SUSPENSION

Nifedipine is only available commercially as 10 and 20 mg liquid-filled, immediate-release capsules and 30, 60, and 90 mg sustained-released tablets/capsules. When patients require nonstandard doses smaller than 10 mg or are unable to swallow capsules, the contents of the immediate-release capsules have been removed by piercing the capsule with a needle and withdrawing the contents into a syringe. However, **there are several problems with extracting the contents of the nifedipine capsule with a needle and syringe.** These include a risk for calculating or drawing up an incorrect dose (each manufacturer's capsules may contain a different volume of liquid) and a risk of a needle stick injury. In addition, **the drug should never be placed in an injectable syringe because of the danger of inadvertent intravenous administration of the contents.** Oral syringes that do not connect to IV tubing should be used for all oral liquid medication.

Starting August 27, the Pharmacy will compound a nifedipine 4 mg/ml oral suspension that will be used in pediatric and adult patients who require a smaller dose or are unable to swallow capsules or tablets. The nifedipine suspension will be dispensed in oral unit-dose syringes for inpatients. **Nursing staff should no longer draw up drug solution from a capsule dosage form, as the risk of inadvertent administration by an inappropriate route is too high.**

IV ADMINISTRATION GUIDELINE FOR ADULTS

Two Nursing Policies: **Administration of Intravenous Push Medications** by RNs in Adult Patients (N-08.021) and **Administration of Intravenous Drip Medications** by RNs in Adult Patients (N-08.025) have been replaced with drug-specific IV administration guidelines that incorporate both IV push and IV drip/infusion administration into one document. Each medication now has an individual page which includes: the pharmacological class; indications for use; preferred method of administration; blood pressure, electrocardiogram/heart rate, and respiratory monitoring requirements (for both IV push and IV drip administration); usual dose and dilution guidelines; and infusion rate information. Medication guidelines also include prescribing restrictions and other miscellaneous information specific to the medication (e.g., extravasation risk).

The IV Administration Guidelines for Adults for each medication are available in the UIHC Formulary and Handbook (<http://www.formularyproductions.com/uihc/>). The guidelines are under the specific drug monograph for each medication and the link is titled IV Administration Guidelines-Adults (e.g., the dopamine IV administration guidelines will be in the dopamine monograph in the Formulary under the IV Administration Guidelines-Adults link).

Please contact the Drug Information Center (6-2600) or the Pharmacy serving your area for any questions on IV drug administration and the reformatted guidelines.