

K.C. CAT CLINIC
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GIVING YOUR CAT FLUIDS UNDER THE SKIN

We will have an instruction session for you before you give fluids to your cat the first time. We will go through the parts of the infusion set and the technique for administering the fluids.

Think of the cat as a pillow in a pillowcase. You are going to insert the needle in the space between the pillow case (the skin) and the pillow (the cat's body). Use the area over the back. The skin is very loose here, especially over the shoulders. Pull the skin up to form a "tent". Feel the space where you are going to put the needle. Insert the needle; bevel up, parallel to the cat's body. Don't go down. It should not meet with any resistance other than the initial resistance as you penetrate the skin. It should feel like you are taking the needle through a piece of fabric. Start the flow of fluid by opening up the stopcock on the fluid line. You should see water dripping through the drip chamber where the line enters the bag. Each mark on the bag is 50 cc. Most cats will be getting about 150 cc per treatment. Exact amounts are not critical. 100-175 cc will be OK. If water is not dripping, squeeze the line where the stopcock crimped it to fully open it. If that doesn't work, adjust the needle under the skin by rotating it or moving it a little backwards or forwards. This should not elicit any significant discomfort. If you feel that your cat really hurts or is fighting the process too much, stop. Call the clinic and we'll try to troubleshoot the situation.

When you receive your set of fluids you will get a bag that contains 1 liter of fluid, an IV line, and 10 needles. You will use a new needle for each administration. Place the capped used needles in a glass container with a secure lid. Return the used bag, line and needles to the clinic for disposal.

A good place to give the fluids is the bathroom. Use a hanger on the shower curtain rod. Place the bag over the hook to hang it. The higher the bag, the faster the fluids will run. You can sit on the floor or the commode with your cat in your lap while the fluids run. Wherever you choose to give the fluids, keep it consistent. Most cats tolerate the treatments well and the benefit derived from them is great. But most cats are going to have some apprehension associated with it. Your relationship with your cat will be better if (s) he knows that this is going to be done in a specific location that will probably be avoided at other times.

You may see that your cat has a fat foot or elbow after some of the treatments. It is probably fluid that has gravitated down from the back. It rarely causes discomfort and should be gone in 10 hours or so. If you have any concerns, of course, call the clinic.

Keep your fluids in a cool place or in the refrigerator between use. Let the fluids warm to room

temperature before using. Don't contaminate the fluid bag, line or needles. If you have questions about a possible contamination, get a new bag. Keeping your needle capped and leaving the line intact usually is sufficient to keep the fluids OK for use.

You may notice some discrepancy in the fluid levels from bag to bag. The fluid level on the bag will vary depending on the amount of air in the bag at the time that it was processed at the manufacturer. The volume within the bag remains consistent. Let us know if we need to remove some air in order to "zero" the fluid level for easier administration.