



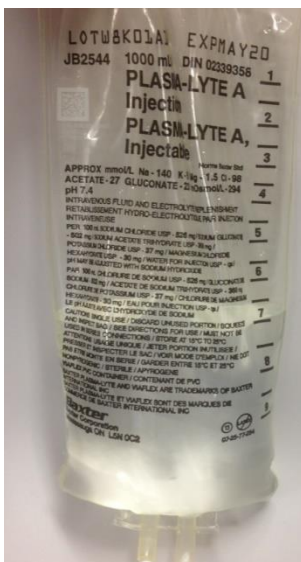
## Administering Subcutaneous Fluids

Fluids given under the skin can be very helpful in maintaining hydration for cats and dogs. Subcutaneous fluids allow for larger volumes of fluid to be administered at one time and are absorbed more slowly.

### Getting a fluid line set up

A fluid bag should always be clear. Discard the bag immediately if there is a discolouration to the fluid or cloudiness as this could mean it has become contaminated. Once opened, a fluid bag may last about 3-4 weeks.

- Remove plastic cover on bag and line set.
- Holding bag upside down remove rubber stopper from the nipple on the bottom of the bag
- Insert the spike from the line into the nipple on the bag and turn bag right side up again.
- Pinch the drip indicator to let it fill with fluid so you can see the flow
- Allow the fluid to run through the entire line, watching for any bubbles in the line.
- All bubbles and air need to exit the line before use
- Clamp the line closed with the roller stopper or the pinch clamps once the line has been run
- Put on the needle and twist the threaded cap to lock it in place



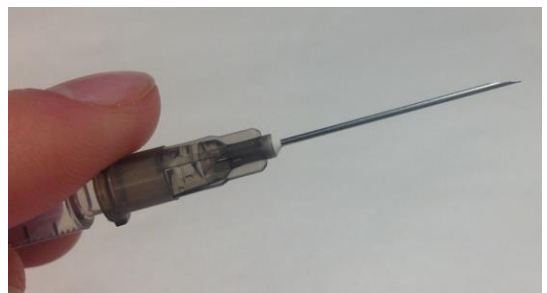
### Reading the fluid bag

There are measurement lines on the side of the bag that indicate every 100mLs with a number and a line. There are small lines in between these that indicate 50mLs increments. When the bag is full, there is 1000mLs, and after 100mLs is given the fluid level will indicate that there are 900mLs remaining in the bag.

### Needles

Needles are sharp, please be careful! All needles have a point at the end that is sharp, but becomes "burred" and dull after use. This is why needles are meant for single use injection and should be replaced for each use. Needles have a

beveled edge. The beveled edge should point upwards when giving subcutaneous fluids.



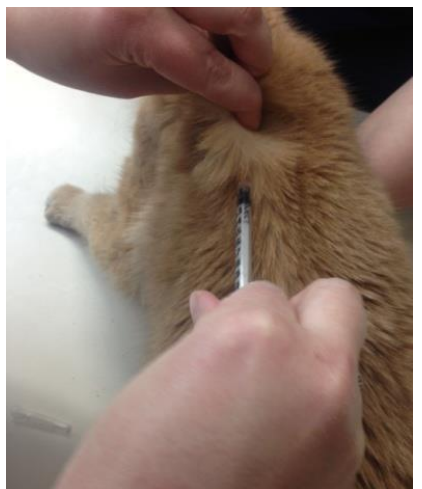
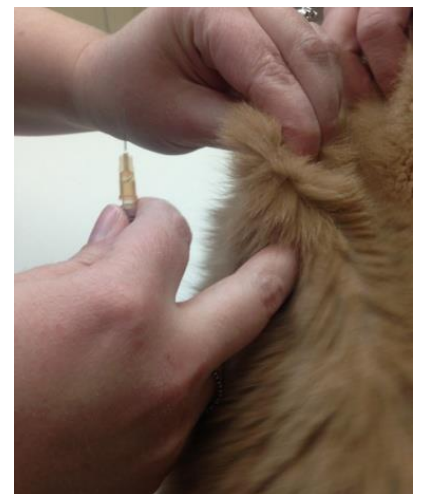


## Where to administer the fluids

Fluid administration can be given anywhere under the skin, however, over the shoulder area tends to be the easiest location. If larger volumes are being recommended or there is a reason that over the shoulders cannot be done, fluids can be given over the hips as well. Remember that gravity will affect the fluid inside the skin too, so you may notice that the fluid bulge will “fall” to one side or the other, do not worry, they will still be absorbed!

## Administering fluids technique #1

- Remove the needle cap
- With your non-dominant hand, lift the skin to create a “tent”
- Using your index finger of your dominant hand, find the “door” to the tent. This is where your injection will enter
- With your dominant hand, place the needle parallel to the animal’s body
- Hold the needle with the bevel of the needle pointing upwards
- With confidence, insert the needle all the way to the hub into the “door” of the “tent”
- Open the roller stopper or unclamp the clamp to allow fluids to flow, you can watch this through the drip indicator.
- If you have accidentally pierced in one side of the skin and out the other the fluid will flow onto the skin instead of under it. If this happens clamp the line, remove the needle and try again.
- During administration continue to feel the surrounding skin for it to feel “tight”. If this occurs, it is time to stop giving the fluids in that location.
- When finished re-clamp the clamp or roll the roller to stop the fluid flow
- Pinch the skin around the needle as you remove the needle
- Replace the needle with a fresh needle to avoid contamination



## Administering the injection technique #2

- Remove the needle cap
- With your dominant hand, place the needle parallel to the animal’s body, close to the skin
- With your non-dominant hand, take the skin close to the needle and then pull it over the needle so the needle is inserted to the hub by the skin being pulled over it
- Open the roller stopper or unclamp the clamp to allow fluids to flow, you can watch this through the drip indicator



- Continue to feel the surrounding skin for it to feel “tight”. If this occurs, it is time to stop giving the fluids in that location
- When finished re-clamp the clamp or roll the roller to stop the fluid flow
- Pinch the skin around the needle and remove the needle
- Replace the needle with a fresh needle to avoid contamination



## Trouble shooting

- If the fluid seems to be running slowly
  - The needle can be rotated under the skin or pointed a little to one side or the other
  - The bag can be squeezed to encourage the fluid flow to quicken
  - Hanging the bag higher will allow gravity to help with the flow
- If the fluid is coming out all over the fur
  - The needle has likely gone through the skin and back out
  - Clamp the fluid flow, remove the needle and reposition
- A small amount of blood is noticed after removing the needle
  - The needle may have gone through a small superficial vessel, don't panic. Apply a small amount of pressure to the area for a moment and then the blood can be cleaned off after.

## Prescribed frequency and volume

Please give \_\_\_\_\_ mLs under the skin every \_\_\_\_\_ days.

Sharp needles should not go in the garbage but can be collected then dropped off at any pharmacy, human or veterinary hospital to be disposed of properly.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns at (250) 758-3985 or by email at [nveth@shaw.ca](mailto:nveth@shaw.ca)