

# Rheumatology Patient Information For A Successful Infusion Therapy

## **HYDRATE, HYDRATE, HYDRATE**

*It is always good to drink plenty of water but it is especially important prior to infusion therapy. It's not easy to palpate veins when you are dehydrated.*

- Try to remember to take extra fluids a couple of days before and up to your infusion therapy as it helps us to find those plump veins much easier
- Don't wait till the night before to hydrate as it may keep you from having a good night's sleep.
- Avoid alcoholic drinks, caffeinated drinks including coffee, tea and soft drinks which can be very dehydrating to your system.

## **REST**

Getting a good night's rest the night before will help you feel less anxious and better able to tolerate the long day you might have in the infusion room or the fatigue you may feel after your infusion treatment.

## **EAT A HEALTHY BREAKFAST**

Unless your nurse asks you to fast for some reason, eat a healthy balanced meal to keep your blood sugar steady during the infusion. Having food in your system will also help with potential nausea or headaches.

## **BE ON TIME**

We will not prepare your medication till you arrive. Please be on time so that we can do a proper assessment and keep you on schedule. If it is your first infusion, please come a bit early to take care of any paperwork before the treatment starts.

## **PLAN FOR YOUR COMFORT**

Wear something soft and easy to move in. Sitting in a chair can make you stiff, you don't need clothes to restrict you. And remember we will need access to your arms for your IV placement. As our infusion room tends to be cold and some people feel an IV gives them a chill, you're welcome to bring a blanket from home.

## **MAKE THE TIME ENJOYABLE**

Depending on how long your infusion is scheduled, you might want to bring along some things to pass the time such as books and/or magazines. Our facility also offers Wi-Fi so you can connect to the Internet through your laptop, tablet, MP3 player, or smartphone. If you plan on listening to entertainment, please remember to bring your headphones as not to disturb other patients.

## **BRING SNACKS**

We have a refrigerator and a microwave available for those long scheduled infusions. Feel free to bring a snack or lunch. A variety of coffee and hot drinks are available in our infusion suite.

## **SPEAK UP**

If at any time during your infusion you are concerned about your well-being, feeling uncomfortable or worried about anything, speak up. Even our wonderful nurses cannot read your mind or may be distracted with other patients. You know your own body better than anyone and if something just doesn't feel right, speak up if you need to.

## **HAVE SOMEONE DRIVE YOU**

It's impossible to predict how you will respond to an infusion or whatever pre-medications you may receive such as diphenhydramine (Benadryl). So you may not want to drive yourself home, especially for your first infusion.

## **BETWEEN INFUSIONS, TELL YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT ANY CHANGES IN YOUR HEALTH**

Because your infusions may be four to eight weeks apart, you may notice changes in your health. Be sure to let your doctor know if you are taking any new medications, if you may be pregnant, or if your weight changes significantly. Call our triage nurse if you have any infections, illnesses or open wounds that may interfere with you safely receiving your scheduled infusion.