

# Subcutaneous Fluid Administration at Home

Even with the best education before you leave the practice, you may have questions about SQF administration when you and your pet get home. This handout should provide answers to your most frequently asked questions, make you feel confident, and help ensure treatments go smoothly for you and your pet.

■ **THERE ARE BUBBLES IN THE LINE—WILL THEY HURT MY PET?**

Small bubbles in the line will not harm your pet. However, if you are concerned about them, simply open the clamps and allow fluid to run through the line until the bubbles are gone.

■ **I PUT THE NEEDLE IN AND OPENED THE CLAMP, BUT FLUID IS GOING EVERYWHERE! WHAT SHOULD I DO?**

The needle may have gone through one side of the pinched skin and out the other, allowing fluid to flow through the hole created. This can happen if the tent in the skin is not high enough or if the needle enters at an angle rather than parallel to the pet's spine.

To resolve this problem, pull the needle back slightly and adjust the angle, or remove the needle completely and try again. The same needle can be used for 2 attempts. If a third attempt is needed, use a fresh needle.<sup>1</sup>

■ **THE FLUID IS NOT FLOWING IN THE DRIP CHAMBER. WHAT IS WRONG?**

First, make sure the line is open and not clamped. If the line is open and has not collapsed on itself where the clamp has been, adjust the needle by either moving it further in, pulling it back slightly, or adjusting the angle. If these methods are unsuccessful, create a larger space under the skin by pulling up on the skin tent.

■ **THE FLUID I GAVE LAST TIME IS STILL THERE. SHOULD I GIVE THE NEXT DOSE?**

Do not give the next dose if the fluid has not been absorbed completely. Contact the veterinary practice because the patient may need to be examined and the dose volume or frequency adjusted.

■ **THE DRIP CHAMBER IS FULL OF FLUID AND I CANNOT SEE THE FLUID DRIPPING.**

To remove fluid from the drip chamber, fill the chamber completely by squeezing it gently until it is as full as possible. Once the drip chamber is completely full, turn it and the bag upside down, and squeeze the fluid from the chamber back into the fluid bag.

**Reference**

1. Gaitán-Fonseca C, Romo-Castillo D, Cerda-Cristerna BI, Pozos-Guillen AJ, Masuoka D. Bevel tip deformation in new and used dental needles. *Microsc Res.* 2015;3(1):1-5.

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