



Expected Practice:

Adult Use of Concentrated Heparin

August 2015 – Review

PURPOSE

Provide DHS expectations for the availability and use of various commercially available injectable heparin concentrations purchased and stocked by DHS facilities. The intention is to minimize the potential for errors by providing clear identification of different heparin concentrations by specific dose and form as well as eliminating the use of highly concentrated heparin strengths within DHS facilities.

EXPECTATIONS

1. **Peripheral flush:** All peripheral flushes (pediatrics and adults) are to be standardized to normal saline, instead of heparin, whenever clinically appropriate.
2. **Pre-filled heparin syringes** should be used for heparin flushes per facility policy:
 - Heparin 10 units/milliliter
 - Heparin 100 units/milliliter
3. **Heparin Carpuject syringes:** The only available Carpuject heparin syringe is the 100 units/milliliter. Carpuject heparin 5,000 units/milliliter syringes will NOT be purchased by any DHS facility. Having one concentration of Carpuject syringes will eliminate potential error between visual identification of different concentrations.
4. **Premixed heparin intravenous solutions** shall be standardized to the following concentrations, per facility policy:
 - Heparin 25,000 units/500mL
 - Heparin 1,000 units/500mL (for arterial lines)

A facility-specific "Heparin Continuous Infusion Administration" policy should detail the specific infusion rate for the selected concentration.

5. **Concentrated heparin vials:** The maximum heparin vial concentration available within each facility shall be 5000 units/milliliter. All heparin vials with concentrations greater than 5,000 units/milliliter will NOT be purchased by any DHS facility to minimize potential errors associated with the inadvertent use of very high heparin concentrations.

Concentrated heparin vials are limited to the following concentrations for use as an IV additive or in special procedures. Facility policy will dictate which of the following heparin concentrations are available and stocked in specific patient care areas:

- Heparin 5,000 units/milliliter
- Heparin 1,000 units/ milliliter
- Heparin 100 units/milliliter