

Storage of Total Parenteral Nutrition (TPN)

All TPN bags should be stored in the refrigerator. The refrigerator temperature should be between 36°F and 46°F. Make sure there is enough storage space in the refrigerator and that it is clean. The shelves should be cleaned with either soap and water or a bleach solution.

Remove the TPN formula from the refrigerator and place it on a clean counter-top approximately 2 -3 hours before infusing to allow the formula to come to room temperature. Do not place the formula in direct sunlight. Do not microwave, heat in an oven or place in warm water to warm more quickly than 2-3 hours. Wait for it to warm to room temperature on its own. The time you start your infusion is not as critical as assuring that the TPN is at room temperature. It is better to simply delay the start of the infusion by a few hours and safely warm the TPN solution.

If you are going out and want to hook up when you get home, you can take the TPN bag out of the refrigerator as much as 4-6 hours in advance. TPN formula is good for 24 hours at room temperature. If it takes 2-3 hours to get to room temperature, you still have a full 24 hours from that point.

Infusing cold TPN straight from the refrigerator is not harmful, but it can be uncomfortable. It can feel similar to eating ice cream too fast, which can cause headaches and chills.

It is important to know what to do if there is a loss of power or an emergency. If the power goes off, keep the refrigerator door closed. Start counting when the power has been off for 6 hours. You have 24 hours from that point. If you do not have a back-up power-source, you may want to locate a near-by place to store your formula with someone who can offer a clean, safe storage place. Follow the guidelines in your Patient Resource Guide for more specific information on an emergency or a disaster.