

■ What happens if something goes wrong at home?

The HiTH Virtual staff will be in contact with you by video-call or telephone everyday whilst you are on our program. Also, a nurse and doctor are on call 7 days a week to assist if there are any problems.

■ What happens when I finish my treatment course?

You will have a follow-up appointment made with your treating doctor. You may be prescribed some oral antibiotics to take for some time after the intravenous treatment is finished.

Contact the HiTH Virtual team for the following issues:

- your temperature is 38°C degrees or higher, you have chills or shakes or you feel unwell
- you develop a rash, hives, or swelling around your mouth or eyes
- you have discomfort in your arm, neck or shoulder (on the side where the catheter is placed)
- your infusion pump is leaking or not working
- there is a problem with your intravenous line or it has changed position or becomes dislodged or damaged
- the intravenous line exit site or your arm becomes red and swollen
- there is bleeding from the exit site
- the dressing lifts off or becomes dirty
- you have a fall at home
- you are taken to the Emergency Department or are admitted to a hospital



If in Doubt, Reach Out Call HiTH Virtual

Between the hours of 8am to 9pm,
telephone the **HiTH Virtual** team on
9113 2899 or **0456 204 869**.

Outside of these hours, if urgent, please call
the **Infectious Diseases Team** on call
via SGH Switch **9113 1111**

For any life threatening concerns,
you will need to present to the
Emergency Department or call 000.



IMPORTANT! PLEASE NOTE.

SEVERE SHORTNESS OF BREATH,
CHEST PAIN, or COLLAPSE is a
TRUE EMERGENCY

**DON'T HESITATE – Call '000' and
ask for an Ambulance**

The HiTH Virtual Intravenous Antibiotic Program on-call service only applies whilst you are on the program.

Please do not call the HiTH Virtual team once you have completed the program.

If you have any medical concerns after completion of the program, you should contact your GP or attend the local hospital Emergency Department.



Intravenous Antibiotic Program Patient Information



Reviewed By
St George Hospital
Consumer Advisory Group
Working together

What is HiTH Virtual?

HiTH Virtual is conducted by the Infectious Diseases department of St George Hospital. It is designed to allow patients who require intravenous antibiotics to get out of hospital and to continue their treatment at home.

How does HiTH Virtual work?

The HiTH Virtual nurse will give you detailed information about your treatment plan and the HiTH service, which will include:

- How many days of treatment are planned
- The type of intravenous line that will be used to administer the treatment
- Exactly what your treatment will entail
- The benefits and risks involved in receiving your treatment through the service

If you decide to have this service, the nurse will provide all the education that you and your carers will need to ensure that everything runs as smoothly and safely as possible.

Who administers my home intravenous therapy?

There are a number of options for your intravenous antibiotics that the HiTH Virtual team will explain:

Self-administration

Most patients may administer their own intravenous antibiotics after training from our staff

Carer

A relative or friend may be trained by our staff to provide your care at home

HiTH Clinic

You may need to return to the HiTH clinic daily or as needed for your intravenous antibiotic

How do I know if I can have my treatment through HiTH Virtual?

In most cases, to be able to enter the program you should have available at home:

- A telephone to contact the service as necessary
- A carer/relative/support person to provide assistance if necessary
- A refrigerator
- Access to reliable transport/driver for the entire course of treatment. This is especially important after-hours in case a problem occurs
- You also need to be mobile enough to safely manage at home

Where is the HiTH Virtual clinic held?

Weekday and weekend clinics are held in the HiTH Clinic, St George Hospital. Before you are accepted onto HiTH Virtual, the nurse will show you the location of the HiTH clinic.

All patients are admitted with approval from Infectious Diseases specialists from St George Hospital.

When can I start?

If your doctor feels that you are ready to be managed at home, you may start on HiTH Virtual. Time will be required to prepare the antibiotic, so you will be given a likely start date by the HiTH Virtual team.

What are the costs involved?

The cost of the intravenous antibiotics, pumps, the intravenous line dressings and the loan of equipment to monitor your heart rate, blood pressure and temperature will be covered by HiTH Virtual. When you return each week for review, you will be given your medications and supplies for the following week. If you run out of any supplies, contact the HiTH Virtual team.

What are the risks?

You have an intravenous line that will be used for the intravenous antibiotics. There are potential complications related to your intravenous line and the antibiotics you are receiving. These risks are not specific to where you receive your care. In other words these problems could also occur if you remain as a patient in hospital.

The intravenous related risks include: a clot or air bubble in the blood vessel of your arm or chest, swelling and redness of the veins of your arm and infection.

Side effects of your antibiotics may develop at any stage during treatment, such as a rash or diarrhoea. If this occurs it may be necessary to change your antibiotic.

Sometimes your treatment may not have the desired effect of successfully fighting your infection or you may develop new symptoms while on the program. If this occurs, you may need to come back to a hospital ward for ongoing care.