

SUITABILITY OF MEDICINES

The most important principle to use when assessing suitability for an infusion to be administered via a peripheral intravenous catheter (PIVC) is that ALL intravenous medicines potentially pose a threat to vessel health.

In broad terms the safety of a medicine infusion to prevent damage to the vessel will relate to factors such as:

- pH
- Osmolarity
- Viscosity
- Volume of dilution
- Speed of infusion
- Size and fragility of the peripheral vein

A central vascular access device (CVAD) should be the preferred device to administer infusions of vesicant chemotherapy and parenteral nutrition.

For some infusions, use of a CVAD is the preferred or essential route, for example, vasoconstrictor medicines (e.g. adrenaline and noradrenaline).

Many medicines administered by IV injection have a high osmolarity. Diluting the injection with sodium chloride 0.9% or glucose 5% before administration will reduce the osmolarity).

Note: The use of a CVAD is specified for some medicines in the Summary of Medicine Product Characteristics (SmPC). Where this is the case the recommendation should be followed.

See the Medusa website for more information

<http://medusa.wales.nhs.uk/Home.asp>