



Consumers Can Help Prevent Harmful Medication Incidents

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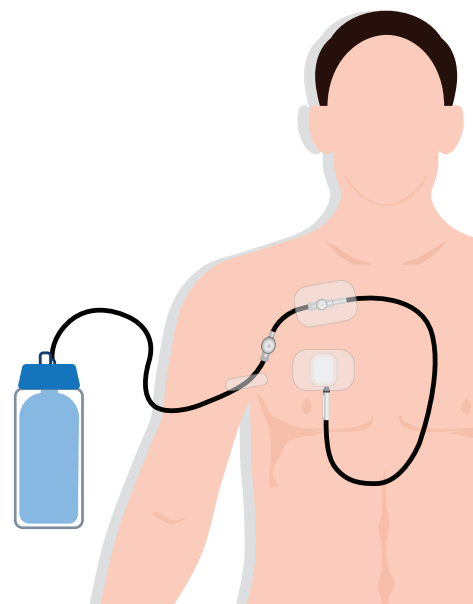
Not Too Fast, Not Too Slow: What You Need to Know about Elastomeric Pumps

An elastomeric pump is also called an infusor, “baby bottle”, or “balloon pump.” It consists of a bottle containing a balloon-like device to hold a liquid medication. The pump is used to give medications into a patient’s vein over a set period of time. The balloon inside the bottle shrinks as the medication is given. If the medication is given too quickly, there can be serious side effects. If it’s given too slowly, the treatment may not work as well as it should.

ISMP Canada has received reports describing people using these pumps at home whose medication was delivered either too quickly or too slowly.

The following tips are shared from an analysis of the reports:

- Ask your health care provider how long it will take for your pump to empty. If the balloon shrinks faster or slower than expected, or if you have other concerns, let your health care provider know right away.
- Keep your pump away from heat or direct sunlight. Heat can cause the pump to deliver medication too quickly.
- Position your pump (for example, with a carrying pouch or case) at about the same level as where the tube connects to your body.



Different types of elastomeric pumps are available. Instruction guides are often provided by the manufacturers or health care organizations. For example, a provincial cancer agency developed a guide for one type of elastomeric pump: [Your INFUSOR™ – A Guide for Patients](#). Ask your health care team if a guide is available for your pump.

This newsletter was developed in collaboration with Best Medicines Coalition and [Patients for Patient Safety Canada](#).

Recommendations are shared with healthcare providers, through the [ISMP Canada Safety Bulletin](#), so that changes can be made together.

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