

Intravenous Furosemide (Lasix®) Therapy

Furosemide is a medicine used to treat symptoms of heart failure. If you have heart failure, your heart is not able to pump blood as well as it should. This causes fluid to back up into your lungs and some parts of your body.

Furosemide is a diuretic medicine (water pill) that helps remove extra sodium (salt) and water from your body. It also helps your kidneys make more urine. When your body gets rid of extra fluid, your heart is able to pump better.

If you have questions, ask your physician or nurse.

Receiving furosemide in the clinic

During your visit to the clinic, your physician may decide that furosemide therapy will help you. Furosemide can be taken as a pill by mouth or received as an injection into a vein. When it is given by injection, it removes fluid more quickly.

The nurse will prepare the medicine in a syringe. It will then be slowly injected into your vein through a small needle.

You will likely feel the need to urinate within minutes after the medicine is given. You may need to urinate several times over the next few hours as your body gets rid of fluid.

After receiving furosemide, we will ask you to stay seated in the clinic waiting area until you are able to urinate and feel comfortable safely getting home.

Side effects of furosemide

This medicine removes extra fluid from your body, so you may have these symptoms:

- Dizziness
- Light-headedness
- Weakness
- Muscle cramps or leg pain
- Dry mouth
- Increased thirst
- Ringing in your ears or hearing loss

What to do at home

Keep a record

It is important to keep a written log at home to help you notice changes in your body or how you feel.

- Record your blood pressure every day.
- Record your weight. Weigh yourself each day when you wake up, after using the bathroom and before eating or drinking.
- Record any symptoms you experience.

Limit salt and fluids

- Limit the amount of salt in your diet to 2,000 milligrams or less per day.
- Limit the amount of fluid in your diet to about 48 ounces (about 1 1/2 liters) per day. This includes foods that are not solid such as soup, popsicles, jello, yogurt and ice cream.

Know the symptoms of heart failure

Use the ***Heart Failure Zone*** guide to help you manage your symptoms. Please call the clinic at 312.695.4965 if you notice any of these symptoms:

- Gaining 2 pounds or more in 1 day or 5 pounds or more in 1 week
- Swelling of your feet, legs or belly
- Increasing shortness of breath
- New onset of coughing
- Dizziness when standing or sitting
- Fast or irregular heart rate
- Chest pain that is relieved

Call 911 or go straight to the emergency department if you have:

- Severe and constant shortness of breath
- Fainted or “passed out”
- Chest pain that does not go away or chest discomfort that is not relieved by nitroglycerin and lasts more than 15 minutes
- Confusion or trouble thinking
- Signs of an allergic reaction to furosemide such as:
 - Swelling of your tongue or face
 - New rash
 - Feeling as if your throat is closing

For more information

Please contact us with any questions, for consultations or to request more information.

Northwestern Medicine Bluhm Cardiovascular Institute

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Galter Pavilion, Suite 19-100

Chicago, Illinois 60611

312.695.4965

TTY: 312.926.6363

Internet resources

These websites offer more helpful information about heart health.

Northwestern Medicine Bluhm Cardiovascular Institute – **heart.nm.org**

American Heart Association (AHA) – **heart.org**

American College of Cardiology – **cardiosmart.org**

