

Let's Talk About...

Parenteral nutrition

Parenteral nutrition (PN) is a special liquid food mixture for children who cannot swallow food. Your child receives PN through an IV (small tube that goes into the vein).

Why does my child need PN?

Your child needs PN if they cannot swallow food due to an abnormality or illness. Their digestive system may not be working right, or they may have had surgery to remove part of the stomach or intestines. Your child must get nutrition in another way.

PN will provide your child with nutrients needed for normal growth and development. Good nutrition helps your child heal wounds and fight infections. Eating food is the best form of nourishment, but PN is a good way to get nutrition until your child is better.

How does my child receive PN?

PN consists of two liquids:

- **Clear yellow fluid:** Contains carbohydrates, protein, vitamins, minerals, and micronutrients (tiny traces of nutrients the body needs)
- **White fluid:** Delivers essential fatty acids for calories, healthy cells, and brain growth

Healthcare providers will give your child the two liquids together through the IV delivered by an IV pump machine. Your child will receive a new bag of PN every day because the fluid goes right into the bloodstream and it must be sterile to prevent a blood infection.



