



A Beginner's  
Guide to

# LIVING WELL

With Home TPN



# Making Home TPN a Part of Your Home

**Every home TPN journey is different.**

If you're just getting started on home TPN, it can be overwhelming, but it should never stop you.

In fact, home TPN is about giving you the autonomy to manage your condition in the comfort of your home, versus being in and out of a hospital or clinic, so you or your loved one can thrive while on home TPN.

But that isn't to say it doesn't bring challenges of its own.

**At Nutrishare, we believe having a clear path for integrating home TPN care is key.**

Building your schedule around clinical things like caring for a central line, scheduling timely delivery of your TPN formulations and supplies, are certainly a must.

Just as important is finding a way to organize everything that comes with home TPN care. From practical storage solutions, to home TPN-friendly furnishings, setting up your home in a way that makes everyday care easy and stress-free is a great place to start.

In our 30+ years of providing home TPN support to patients just like you, we've picked up some tips, tricks, and best practices to keep you feeling empowered to live the best life you or your loved one can on home TPN, including:

- Best practices for refrigerating your home TPN
- Storing your TPN supplies and equipment
- Setting up your home TPN administration station
- Traveling on home TPN

**We hope the information in this eBook will help you develop just the right approach for you to ensure your comfort on home TPN.**

*NOTE: Nothing in this eBook is intended to convey medical advice.*



# Tips for refrigerating your TPN formula and hydration bags

TPN formula needs to be refrigerated when not in use. Storing TPN and hydration bags in your refrigerator can be problematic. Home TPN bags can take up a lot of space in your fridge, and you might not be comfortable storing medicine and food in such close proximity.

## Making room for your TPN bags

Using a mini fridge to store your TPN frees up space in your refrigerator and eliminates the uncomfortable factor of keeping food and medicine together. With a mini fridge, you can also keep your TPN bags near the rest of your home TPN supplies and equipment for more convenient access.

## Keeping your TPN secure in the fridge

If you're concerned about keeping your TPN secure in the fridge or just want to avoid the fridge door being left open on accident or not being shut tightly enough and popping open on its own, a refrigerator lock can also come in handy. Mini fridge locks and child-proof refrigerator locks, especially locks that attach with strong adhesives and don't require drilling to install, are especially beneficial.

## General mini fridge tips

If you decide to use a mini fridge to store your TPN bags, keep in mind a few general use tips for mini fridges to ensure that yours does its job to keep your TPN cool and preserved effectively:

- Avoid placing your mini fridge in a carpeted area. While you technically can install a refrigerator over carpet, the carpeting can lead to poor performance because it retains heat and can block airflow to the fridge's outer components.
- Likewise, do not place cardboard underneath your mini fridge. Not only can cardboard block essential airflow, but it could also catch fire from the heat output by the fridge's outer components.
- Placing a mini fridge near another heat source, such as a radiator, can lead to the fridge's compressor overheating.

## Keeping cool on the go

When you're on the go, a rolling cooler is especially handy for keeping your TPN bags cold. A good rule of thumb is that if it would keep your ice cream from melting on a summer day trip to the beach, it can keep your TPN formula cool!

## Thawing your home TPN

Before you start your TPN for the day, it is recommended to let your formula bag sit out and come to room temperature first. This usually takes one or two hours, or possibly more if your house is especially cold in the winter.

What temperature your TPN should be when you start using it is a matter of preference. Some people are more sensitive to cold than others, and some people prefer to take their TPN at a colder temperature.

Generally, the temperature at which you administer your TPN makes no difference to its efficacy; it's simply a matter of what you find comfortable. Keep in mind that when you're administering your TPN, the formula will warm up a little on its way through your central line as the pump does its work.

## Storing and organizing your home TPN supplies

Needles, syringes, IV administration sets, sterile dressings, gloves, IV fluids, stethoscopes, blood pressure monitors, IV pumps, insulated bag covers, saline flushes, alcohol pads, gauze... In addition to the TPN bags filling up your fridge or mini fridge, life on home TPN comes with a lot of stuff that you need to keep somewhere.

All these home TPN supplies take up a lot of space, but that space doesn't have to overrun your home or your life. Smartly storing and organizing your TPN supplies is a must for keeping your home comfortable and ensuring it still feels like a home, not a hospital.

### Planning your TPN storage solution

When putting together your storage solution for your home TPN supplies, keep in mind a few more helpful tips, especially if you are buying new pieces of furniture for storage, such as chests, bins, or drawers:

- If you buy used containers or pieces of furniture for storage, ensure you can clean them thoroughly before using them.
- Before shopping for new furniture pieces, measure how much space you plan on devoting to them. You can use tape on your floor to mark out the space where your new furniture will go.
- Always double-check how much weight a piece of furniture can hold before you commit to it. Make sure your supplies are well within that weight limit.
- Especially if you have tall drawers or shelves, you can use stackable organizer trays to maximize your storage space on a shelf or drawer.

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## To build up or build out?

Storing your TPN supplies should always take your floor space into account. If you have plenty of floor space to spare, you can build your storage solution outward; if you don't, you can build upward.

A chest of drawers can work exceptionally well for storing TPN since you can organize your supplies by drawer. A stylish chest of drawers not only can hold most, if not all, of your supplies, but it can also really tie the room together!

When using any sort of tall storage solution, whether it's a chest of drawers or stackable plastic bins, it's essential to put the heaviest things on the bottom shelves. Doing so will keep your furniture from becoming too top-heavy and unstable.

For example, bags of IV fluid, any medication that does not need to be kept cold, and your IV pump should go on the bottom shelves, while lighter supplies fill out the top shelves.



## Practical solutions from your local home improvement store

Another great way to store and organize your TPN is to use a tool bench, which you can find at Lowe's, Home Depot, or any other home improvement store. A tool bench's drawers make for convenient and easily accessible storage for assorted TPN supplies, especially if you have dividers to put in them to further organize your storage space. Since most tool benches come on wheels, they can also be moved around easily.


A tool bench with a stainless steel surface will be easier to clean up and disinfect before and after use. And if you can find a tool bench with built-in electrical outlets, all the better—that way, your TPN pump and other supplies won't monopolize your wall outlets.

## Keeping your TPN tidy and accounted for

Keeping your things organized and easy to find when you need them saves you time and cuts down on stress. The same principle holds true for home TPN. This is when cataloging your TPN supplies can come in handy.

By keeping your supplies organized and cataloged, it takes less time and energy to sort through new supplies as they arrive, find the things you need when you need them, and know when you're running low on something in particular.

A label maker is an excellent tool for helping you keep track of your TPN supplies. Store your supplies in drawers and bins, clearly labeled, and you can easily keep track of what goes where. Using dividers, you can further organize your storage space.



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## **Set aside time for sorting your TPN**

Setting aside dedicated time in your daily schedule to sort and organize your TPN supplies can also help you save time and energy. Making it a part of your routine, like taking a dog on a walk in the morning or commuting to and from work, not only gets the job done but also makes the job feel easier.

With home TPN, the more you keep things tidy, the better you'll feel, the more time and energy you'll have, the more space you'll have in your household, and the more easily you can stay on top of TPN supply deliveries.

## **Out-of-sight, out-of-mind**

Cupboards and closet space can also make an ideal space for storing and organizing your home TPN supplies. An important part of your storage solution should be the ability to keep your TPN supplies out of sight, out of mind when not in use, or at least dedicated to a certain part of your home—similar to storing your TPN and hydration bags in a mini fridge instead of your refrigerator.

Just like you can feel worn out by having constant reminders of work in your household, having constant reminders of TPN in your home can feel exhausting. Containing TPN to one physical area of your home and storing your supplies in a discreet place will help you keep tidy and infection-free, and can keep the other areas of your life free of reminders of TPN so you can have a bit more breathing room.

## **Keeping your TPN supplies secure**

An added benefit of keeping things out of sight and out of mind is security. Say you have family coming over for the holidays, and they're bringing their kids over. Or you're expecting to have some construction done soon and there will be contractors and workers coming in and out of your house.

Having closets, cupboards, and opaque storage bins or boxes that you can install child locks onto make for TPN supplies that cannot be accidentally misplaced by a visitor or played with by an unruly niece or nephew or rambunctious pet.

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## In summation: Useful materials for storing your home TPN

- Label maker
- Rolling cart
- Cube shelves
- Stackable bins
- Drawer dividers
- Child-proof locks

## Tips for furniture and fixtures

Most people on home TPN will take their treatment at night while they sleep, as you're likely to not be doing much during that time as it is. Your bedside makes an ideal "base of operations" for administering your home TPN.

When you're setting up your home TPN administration station, here are a few things to keep in mind:

### Have a clean, adequately sized nightstand


Your nightstand isn't just a convenient place to put a glass of water or the book you've been reading. Your nightstand is also a workbench for preparing your TPN formula before bedtime.

The best nightstand for home TPN is big enough to put all the supplies you need on its surface and have everything within arm's reach without clutter.

Your IV pump can fit comfortably on it, and you can keep your IV pole nearby if you have one.

Its surface is easy to clean and sterilize before and after use.

If your nightstand has a drawer in which you can keep the supplies that are most important to keep close at hand, all the better.



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## **An IV pole doesn't just have to be an IV pole**

IV poles are convenient in many ways, but sometimes they can be frustrating as well. Quite a few of our patients have and swear by the Safepole, a patient-designed IV pole engineered for safety, convenience, and no headaches. IV poles such as the [Safepole](#) are incredibly stable and ergonomic by design and have ample storage space for IV bags and other personal effects.

Your IV pole can serve as a multipurpose piece of furniture—a place to store your cell phone, TV remote, water bottle, and more. Some IV poles have built-in electrical outlets, so you can use them like power strips!

## **Know your options for cleaning up spillage**

Accidents happen. While you're administering TPN, every once and a while you might accidentally spill a bit from the bag onto your floor. While that's an easy fix for hardwood or tile, if you have carpeting or a rug, you're right to worry about the occasional spill or leak.

Knowing what you can use to clean a carpet or rug is essential in the case of an accident or occasional leak. Make sure you're aware of whether the carpet or rug is synthetic or natural fibers (or a mixture of both) and know your options for deep cleaning—whether that's renting a carpet cleaner or using a DIY method.

Make sure you know the best and easiest way to clean your carpet or rug before an accident happens, and save yourself the trouble of having to frantically look up how to clean your antique rug when it does.



## Tips for traveling on TPN

It's a common misconception among many people that living on home TPN means living like a homebody or a hermit. This misconception can cause a lot of worry and stress among people just starting out on their home TPN journey.

We don't call home TPN a journey for no reason. Home TPN doesn't confine you to your home, and it doesn't make travel an ordeal or a slog. You can keep traveling—for work, for school, for family; by plane, car, or boat—it just takes some more planning in advance and logistical preparations to ensure you can continue managing your TPN in transit and at your destination.

You can find tips and advice for traveling on home TPN on our blog, [Traveling With Home TPN is Now a Reality](#). May your travels be happy!

### Join a Home TPN Support Group

Every day, home TPN users worldwide find new and creative ways to better integrate their home TPN with their home and many of them share their ideas with others in both public and private support groups across a variety of social media platforms and virtually online.

Nutrishare maintains the [Nutrishare Neighborhood](#), a community of support for all home TPN patients, caregivers, and friends that advances education in the home TPN world with:

- Virtual Zoom meetings with fellow home TPN patients like you
- Consumer Education Seminars (virtual and in-person) from clinical experts
- Sharing Newsletter – Special edition newsletter with stories and tips from other people living with home TPN
- Nutrishare YouTube Channel with patient video stories

Whether you're a Nutrishare patient or not, we welcome you to the neighborhood – a free resource center for home TPN consumers, their family and friends, and clinicians alike.

### [Get to Know the Neighborhood](#)



## Nutrishare – Home TPN that works for you

Now that you've got some practical ideas for getting started, remember this – you are never alone.

### **TPN is not a choice. Who you choose as your provider is.**

At Nutrishare, we're focused on providing a higher standard of care for long-term home TPN consumers with specialized, personalized, and reliable one-on-one patient support.

Nutrishare is also the only pharmacy in the nation that exclusively focuses on providing home TPN. We provide compassionate care and 24/7 support from our award-winning care team of home TPN specialists.

### **At Nutrishare, our patients receive:**

- Comprehensive, personalized support from a dedicated personal clinician and our home infusion team of pharmacists, nurses, and dieticians
- Their choice of supplies delivered nationwide to 48 states, with shipping to Louisiana and Mississippi coming soon

Nutrishare is accepted by most insurance providers, including Medicare, United Healthcare, Aetna, Humana, Cigna, and Anthem, and work with each and every patient to help make coverage simple and easy to understand.

If you're looking for a way to thrive while on home TPN, connect with a member of our care team today by calling 1-800-466-3876, or start an insurance pre-check to get started.