

*Patient Education Sheet*

## **Total Parenteral Nutrition (TPN)**

### **What Is TPN?**

TPN stands for Total Parenteral Nutrition, which can provide your body with the basic building blocks of nutrition that it needs (carbohydrates, proteins, lipids, vitamins, minerals). TPN needs to be given through special access to a large vein.

### **Why me?**

Your doctor has ordered you TPN because you need the extra nutrition it provides. This can be due to surgery, infection, severe vomiting, or bowel obstruction. Depending on your body and what condition you are dealing with, you may need TPN for a shorter or longer time. Your doctor will review specific instructions for your needs.

### **What does it look like?**

TPN is a fluid in a large, clear bag. The fluid can be different colors depending on what nutrition is in the bag. The TPN will be started slowly, and then gradually increased so that your body adjusts to it. Each day you will be given a new bag of fluid through a special pump.

### **How do I know that I am getting the nutrition that I need?**

Before starting your treatment, and at certain times during your treatment, you will have blood work drawn. The results of these blood tests will determine how much of each specific nutrient you need,

and also how your body is responding to it.

The doctor may want to check your blood sugars a few times daily, to make sure that your body is processing the sugar correctly.

### **When should you contact your healthcare provider?**

There can be reactions to individual ingredients in the TPN or medications that are added. If during the TPN, you experience chest pain, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, confusion, or any other symptoms that you are concerned about, contact your healthcare provider right away.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to ask your healthcare provider.

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