OSCE checklist for IV medication administration

An OSCE checklist for IV medication administration covers the rights of medication, checking the prescription and allergies, preparing the medicine with aseptic technique, checking identity and the cannula, giving it at the rate the guidance states, and recording and monitoring the patient.

OSCE checklist for IV medication administration: steps to practise

1. Check the prescription for the right patient, medicine, dose, route, time and frequency, and check the allergy status. Check the patient has not already had the dose.
2. Check how the medicine should be prepared and given, using your local injectable medicines guide, including diluent, compatibility and rate.
3. Wash your hands, collect the medicine, the diluent, the prescribed flush, syringes, a clean tray and a sharps bin, and check each label and expiry date.
4. Prepare the medicine using aseptic non-touch technique, label the syringe, and check it with a second registered professional if your policy requires it.
5. Go to the patient, introduce yourself, confirm identity against the wristband and prescription, check allergies again, explain and gain consent.
6. Make sure emergency equipment and help are available, especially for a first dose.
7. Wash your hands and put on gloves. Check the cannula site for pain, redness or swelling and check it is working with the prescribed flush, as your policy says.
8. Clean the injection port and let it dry.
9. Give the medicine at the rate stated in the guidance, watching the patient for reactions and the site for swelling or leaking. Stop and get help at once if there are signs of a reaction, such as rash, wheeze or breathlessness.
10. Flush the cannula after the medicine as your policy says.
11. Dispose of sharps straight into the sharps bin without recapping, remove gloves and wash your hands.
12. Sign the chart at once, record the time, and monitor the patient for side effects.

What candidates commonly forget

- Giving too fast
- Not checking the allergy status
- Not checking the injectable medicines guide
- Not flushing before and after
- Not documenting straight away
- Not watching for a reaction after a first dose

Local policy comes first

This is our own practice checklist. Your college, hospital or country may do some steps differently. Where local policy and this list disagree, follow local policy.

Practise the hands-on steps with a classmate or in a skills lab, because an AI patient cannot watch your technique. You can practise the talking part with an AI patient, and try one station free with no sign-up. Next, try Giving a first dose of an intravenous antibiotic. Back to the medical surgical nursing OSCE page: medical surgical nursing OSCE, or see the full OSCE checklist list.

Common questions

What is the OSCE checklist for IV medication administration?

Check the prescription and allergies, check the preparation guide, wash hands, prepare aseptically, confirm identity, check the cannula, give at the stated rate, flush, watch for reactions, dispose of sharps and record.

What are the rights of medication?

Right patient, medicine, dose, route and time, plus documentation and the patient's right to refuse. Some courses add more.

Can a student give IV medicines alone?

No. Students only take part as their course and placement allow, under the direct supervision of a registered professional.

Sources

- NICE NG5: medicines optimisation
- WHO: Medication Without Harm

Checked 2026-11-13. Fees and rules change, so confirm them with the regulator before you book.