

	POLICY#: 2.8
SUBJECT: High Risk – Potassium	Effective: 10/01/13
APPROVED BY: Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee	Page 1 of 1

Purpose: To identify Potassium as a high alert medication and provide guidelines for the safe intravenous administration to patients.

Prescribing:

1. Staff physician approval must be obtained to exceed the limits of the established guidelines by completing a non-formulary request

Appropriate indications for use include:

1. Treatment or Prevention of hypokalemia

Dispensing:

1. Undiluted potassium ion solutions will not be floor stocked
2. 20 mEq of potassium shall be admixed with not less than 50 mL of diluent
3. 40 mEq of potassium shall be admixed with not less than 100 mL of diluent
4. 60 mEq of potassium shall be admixed in 250 to 1000 mL of diluent
5. No more than 60 mEq of potassium per liter should be admixed in a Parenteral Nutrition Solution.

Administration:

1. The maximum rate of infusion should be 10 mEq per hour for all general care areas
2. The maximum rate of infusion should be 20 mEq per hour for all critical care areas
3. Potassium containing solutions must be administered via an infusion device.

Specific Monitoring Parameters:

1. Serum Potassium levels – Doses shall not be repeated until the physician has checked the patient’s serum potassium if dose is ≥ 40 mEq of Potassium
2. Glucose
3. Chloride/Phosphorus
4. pH
5. Urine output (if indicated)
6. Cardiac monitor (if infusion rates >0.5 mEq/kg/hour or >10 mEq/hr - in critical care areas)

Adverse Effects:

The patient should be monitored for the following adverse effects:

1. Cardiovascular: Arrhythmias and cardiac arrest, heart block, hypotension
2. Central nervous system: Mental confusion
3. Endocrine & metabolic: Hyperkalemia
4. Local: Pain at site of injection, phlebitis
5. Neuromuscular & skeletal: Muscle weakness, paresthesia, flaccid paralysis

References:

1. Thompson Micromedex.
http://www.thomsonhc.com/hcs/librarian/ND_T/HCS/ND_PR/Main/CS/FDC9C4/DUPLICATIONSHIELDSYNC/2D8705/ND_PG/PRIH/ND_B/HCS/SBK/2/ND_P/Main/PFActionId/hcs.common.RetrieveDocumentCommon/DocId/476330/ContentSetId/100/SearchTerm/potassium%20chloride%20/SearchOption/BeginWith
2. Lexi-Comp Pediatric Handbook 17th edition.