TPN (total parenteral nutrition) is ordered for people who cannot or should not get their nutrition through eating. TPN infuses through a catheter (tube) into a major vein.

TPN includes:
- Sugar and carbohydrates for energy
- Proteins for muscle strength
- Lipids (fat) for energy and/or essential fatty acids
- Electrolytes such as sodium, potassium, phosphate, calcium, and magnesium
- Vitamins and Trace elements such as zinc, copper, manganese, and chromium

Your doctor will discuss the risks and benefits of TPN with you. Before you receive TPN, you will need to tell your doctor and/or pharmacist:
- If you are allergic to any medicines, eggs, or soybeans.
- What medicines you are taking including all prescription, over-the-counter, vitamins, herbals, and supplements.
- If you have or have ever had diabetes or heart, lung, kidney, liver or Addison’s disease.
- If you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant or are breastfeeding.

TPN Supplies
Keep all of your TPN and supplies in a clean, dry place and out of the reach of children. Needles, syringes, tubing, and containers need to be disposed of properly. Ask your supplier how to do this safely.

You will usually be given several days’ supply of TPN at a time. Your supplier will instruct you on how to store it in the refrigerator.
1. Take your next dose from the refrigerator 4 - 6 hours before you will need it.
2. Put it in a clean, dry place.
3. Allow it to warm to room temperature before using. Do not place in microwave.
Giving Your TPN
You will be shown how to hook up and give your TPN.
Follow these guidelines:

- Check the TPN solution closely before giving. It should be clear (not cloudy) and have no floating particles.
- Gently squeeze the bag to make certain that there are no leaks.
- If the TPN is not clear, has particles, or the bag leaks, do not use.
- Follow your TPN schedule as instructed.

Side Effects
TPN may cause side effects.

- **Call 911 if you have trouble breathing.**
- Call your health care provider right away if you have:
  - Fever (>100.5 degrees), chills
  - Stomach pain, headache
  - Rapid weight gain or weight loss (more than 2 pounds in 24 hours)
  - Vomiting
  - Muscle weakness, twitching or cramps, feeling faint
  - Shortness of breath, heart palpitations, or any chest pain
  - Excessive thirst

Signs of Infection
Infection is a risk with TPN. You and your health care provider will need to take steps to prevent infection. These include:

- Wash your hands before and after handling your TPN or IV access site.
- Follow the proper cleaning techniques when starting and stopping the infusion.
- Observe your IV site for possible signs of infection and call your health care provider right away if you notice any of the following:
  - Tenderness
  - Warmth
  - Redness
  - Swelling
  - Drainage
  - Pain

You will be having lab tests and physical exams to check how well the TPN is working and for any side effects. Keep all of your appointments with the lab and your doctor. Talk with your health care provider about any questions or concerns.