

# Information sheet for families: *Surefuser™+ infusion device and infusions*

**PallConsult**  
Support for clinicians  
delivering end-of-life care

This brochure provides information about the Surefuser™+ infusion device (Surefuser™+) and infusions. This device delivers medicine that can help improve the quality of life for the person you are caring for.

This information should be used in conjunction with the Surefuser™+ infusion device and infusions: *troubleshooting and monitoring guide for families.*

## What is an infusion device?

An infusion device is a small, portable device that holds medicines as prescribed by a doctor or nurse practitioner. The device delivers medicine to a person at a constant rate throughout the day and night.

## How does an infusion device work?

Before the infusion device is set up, a nurse will insert a subcutaneous cannula, which is a small plastic device that sits under the person's skin.

The place where the subcutaneous cannula goes into the skin is called an insertion site. Common sites for insertion are the upper arm, the chest, the abdomen and the upper leg. The cannula is secured in place using a clear waterproof dressing. This dressing allows the area to be washed.

The subcutaneous cannula is connected to the infusion device using a clear plastic tube. The device delivers the medicine via the tube under the skin, where it is absorbed into the body. This is called a subcutaneous infusion.

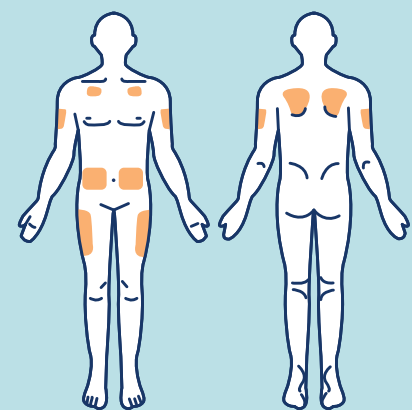
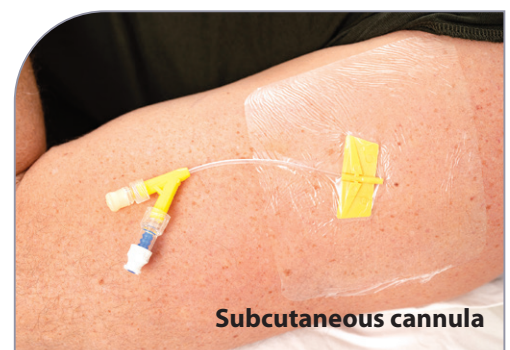
## Why is an infusion device used?

The infusion device and the subcutaneous cannula are a safe and painless way to deliver medicine to help manage a person's symptoms. Medicine in an infusion device is often used to treat common palliative symptoms such as pain, shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting, restlessness or agitation.

An infusion device is used for different reasons, for instance if a person is unable to swallow easily, or if medicine taken by mouth cannot be absorbed well for any reason (e.g. nausea and/or vomiting).

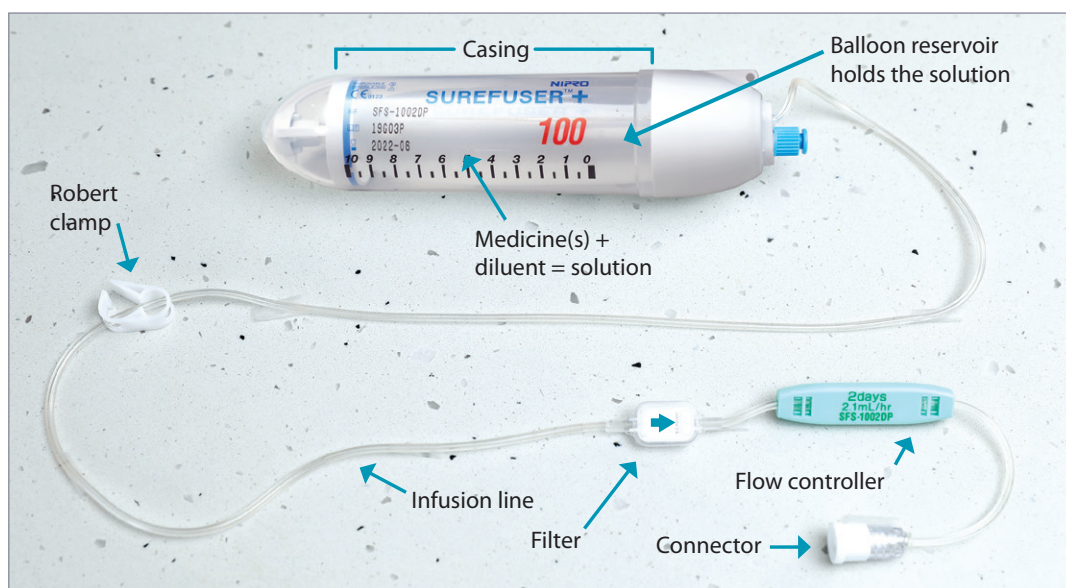
## About the Surefuser™+

The Surefuser™+ is one type of infusion device used in Australia. It is a single-use, disposable device that operates using a balloon system. It does not need batteries or electricity. The elastomeric 'balloon' inside the Surefuser™+ delivers medicine through the subcutaneous cannula as it deflates. The device continues to deliver medicine until it is empty or disconnected by a health professional.



Once the Surefuser™+ is filled with medicine and connected to a person, it will immediately begin to slowly deliver the medicine to help keep a person's symptoms manageable so that they can be cared for while remaining in the place of their choice.

### Parts of a Surefuser™+ and infusion tubing – Figure 1



### What is the role of your health care team?

- ✓ A health professional will insert the subcutaneous cannula into the person
- ✓ A doctor or nurse practitioner will prescribe the medicines to be put in the Surefuser™+
- ✓ A health professional will fill the Surefuser™+ with the medicines and set up and check the functioning of the Surefuser™+.

A health professional will regularly check that:

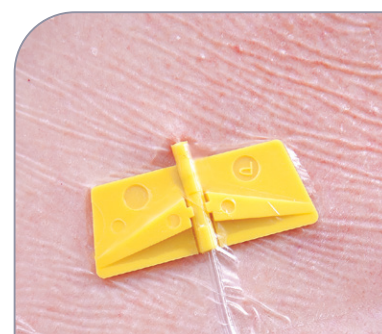
- ✓ The person remains comfortable and their symptoms are managed
- ✓ The subcutaneous cannula remains in place
- ✓ The insertion site does not show signs of swelling, tenderness, redness or leakage
- ✓ The Surefuser™+ is operating correctly, and delivering the correct amount of medicine.

### Caring for a person at home with a Surefuser™+

If you are caring for a person at home, you must report any concerns about the person, their symptoms or the operation of the Surefuser™+ to the health care team. (See contact details on this brochure.)

**The health professional will show you how to look after the person by teaching you the following:**

- **Checking the subcutaneous cannula site every four hours (during the day):**
  - Look at the insertion site and contact the health care team immediately if you notice any of the following:
    - Swelling
    - Tenderness
    - Redness
    - Leakage of medicine or fluid around the insertion site
    - The subcutaneous cannula has come out of the skin or the clear waterproof dressing has moved.



**Example of insertion site suitable for use**

- Checking the Surefuser™+ every four hours (during the day) to ensure:

**NOTE:** Refer to Figure 1 for detailed information about the parts of the Surefuser™+ and infusion line.

- The Robert clamp on the infusion line is open **OR**
- The tubing has been bypassed through the Robert clamp by the nurse

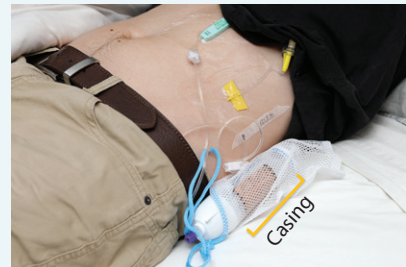


- The tubing is not tangled, kinked or squashed and is securely connected to the subcutaneous cannula



- The casing is at the same level as the subcutaneous cannula insertion site

**NOTE:** The casing should not hang below or above the subcutaneous cannula insertion site

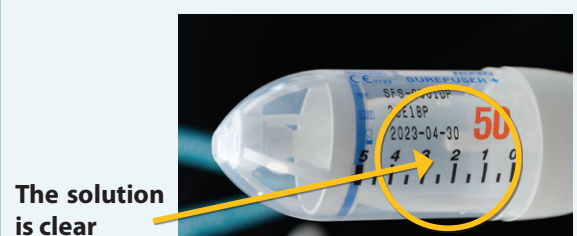


- The blue infusion line has moved down the scale towards zero. This indicates that the balloon is deflating and is delivering medicine to the person

**NOTE:** Use the infusion monitoring label to monitor the progress of the blue infusion line. Mark where the line is every four hours as instructed by the health care team



- The solution in the balloon remains clear without discolouration, fogging or crystallisation
- The device is intact with no solution leakage.



Families or carers are not required to check the device overnight.  
*Check it before you go to bed at night and again when you wake in the morning.*

**Contact your health care team if you have any concerns.**

## Important points to note about the Surefuser™+

Temperature	Positioning	Bathing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ensure the Surefuser™+ remains at room temperature</li> <li>✓ Do not expose the device to extreme heat:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It should not be stored under bedding or in direct sunlight</li> <li>• Use a fan or air-conditioner in the person's room in hot weather</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ Do not expose the device to extreme cold:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a heater in the person's room during cold weather</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ Ensure the <b>flow controller</b> (see Figure 1) is always in contact with the person's skin and held firmly in place with a clear waterproof dressing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ensure the Surefuser™+ <b>casing</b> (see Figure 1) is kept as close as possible to the same level as the subcutaneous cannula insertion site                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not hang the device above or let it hang below the person's insertion site as this will affect the medicine flow rate</li> <li>• Use the carry pouch provided if the person is moving around</li> <li>• Keep the Surefuser™+ on top of bedding when the person is in bed.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The Surefuser™+ is <b>NOT</b> waterproof. It should not be submerged or exposed to a direct stream of water. When showering/ bathing, place the device in a plastic bag to keep it dry.</li> </ul>

### Contact information:

Name of the health care service: .....

Business hours telephone number: .....

After hours telephone number: .....

### Notes:

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