



July 2025 Office Hours

IV Antimicrobial Starts & NHSN Reporting: Do You Know What Counts?

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Objectives

- Define what qualifies as an IV antimicrobial starts in NHSN.
- Identify where the antimicrobial start must occur.
- Accurately count and report qualifying starts.

What is an IV Antimicrobial Start?

- The administration of an intravenous (IV) antimicrobial treatment in an outpatient dialysis setting.
- Must be new or restarted after 21 days.
- Includes IV antiviral and antifungal treatments.

Where Must It Occur?

- **Location requirements:**
 - Must be administered in the outpatient dialysis facility.
 - Medications given in emergency rooms, inpatient units, or infusion centers **do not count**.
 - Temporary holding areas within a hospital are also excluded.

What Counts vs. What Does Not Count?

- **Does Count**

- First dose of a new IV antimicrobial treatment
- Restart of the same treatment after 21+ days without it
- Any reason for administration

- **Does NOT Count**

- Continued administration of the same antimicrobial treatment
- Oral antibiotics
- Antimicrobial flushes
- Administration that occurs outside the dialysis facility that does not qualify (e.g., hospital or ER)

How to Count Multiple Starts?

- **One start per drug per patient per month**
 - If a patient receives two qualifying starts in July (e.g., vancomycin and cefazolin), **report both.**
 - If patient restarts the same treatment within 21 days, **do not report again.**

Handling Unusual IV Antimicrobial Start Situations

- **Restart scenario:**

- A patient stopped cefazolin on June 1 and received it again on July 10 at your dialysis facility—this counts as a new start.

- **Transfer scenario:**

- A patient received vancomycin in the hospital, and another dose was given in your dialysis facility on discharge day—this does NOT count unless it is a new start.

- **Precautionary dose scenario:**

- A patient receives a new IV antimicrobial start at your dialysis clinic before any culture results—this counts if it meets the 21-day rule and is not a continuation.
- Must be authorized by nephrologist or by a licensed provider.

Common Errors to Avoid

- **Counting oral antimicrobials**
- **Including hospital only administrations**
- **Reporting maintenance doses multiple times**
- **Forgetting the 21-day restart gap**

Reporting Tips & Reminders

- Double check the 21-day restart rule.
- Verify administration date and medication name.
- Confirm the medication was administered through an IV.
- New IV antimicrobial in dialysis outpatient unit is reportable.
- Transfer from hospital only count if newly started in your dialysis outpatient facility.
- Clarify route and consult if unsure.

Resources and Support

- [NHSN Dialysis Event Surveillance Protocol](#)
- [NHSN Enrollment Guide](#)
- [Home Dialysis Center Practices Survey](#)
- Submit [Service Now ticket](#)
- NHSN CDC Dialysis team – NHSN@cdc.gov
- SAMS Helpdesk – SAMShelp@cdc.gov

Thank you.

For more information, contact CDC
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