

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

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July 2025

# Objectives

- Define what qualifies as an IV antimicrobial start 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.

# 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**

- A brand new start
- A restart of an antimicrobial course after 21 days of the conclusion of the previous course
- Continued administration if treatment started in the hospital

- **Does NOT Count**

- Continuation of an antimicrobial treatment if the 'restart' occurs within the 21-day period
- Oral antibiotics
- Antimicrobial flushes

## How to Count Multiple Starts?

- There must be greater than 21 days from the end of one IV antimicrobial course to the beginning of a second IV antimicrobial start for both starts to be reported as separate dialysis events, even if different antimicrobials are used.

# 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:**
  - If a patient receives a dose in the hospital and the physician orders the treatment to be continued, this counts as a continuation.
- **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.
- If the IV antimicrobial is started in the hospital and is ordered to be continued upon discharge, the dialysis facility would report it as a continuation.
- Clarify route and consult if unsure.

# Resources and Support

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

# Thank You

For more information, contact CDC/ATSDR

1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)

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