

# Physician MEMO

To | All Physicians and Allied Health Professionals  
From | Bruce Walley, MD SR VP Medical Affairs  
Charles Hartis, PharmD Manager Clinical Pharmacy  
Date | 1/28/2011  
Re | **Thorazine (Chlorpromazine) IV Administration Risks—  
Physician Education**

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At one of our facilities a physician ordered Thorazine IV for hiccups. Thorazine was dispensed as a vial and the nurse proceeded to give the drug IV push. The risks of IV push Thorazine include hypotension, arrhythmias and vein irritation. The patient experienced a serious adverse event and while this cannot be directly attributed to the medication, it may have been a contributing factor.

In response to this event, and to ensure a safe environment for our patients, pharmacy has employed several strategies to help prevent this event from occurring in the future. We also need your help to ensure safe use of this medication.

Per *Micromedex*,

- **Hiccoughs, Intractable (Oral is preferred route. Give IV only if PO and IM routes failed):** 25-50 mg ORALLY 3-4 times a day. If symptoms persist for 2-3 days, give 25-50 mg IM. If symptoms continue to persist, give 25-50 mg IV in 500-1000 mL of saline by slow IV infusion with patient flat in bed (monitor blood pressure closely)
- **Nausea and Vomiting:** INTRAVENOUS; (during surgery) 2 mg IV per fractional injection (dilute to 1 mg/mL, i.e., 1 mL (25 mg) mixed with 24 mL of saline) at 2-minute intervals, do not exceed 25 mg
- **Tetanus; Adjunctive treatment:** INTRAVENOUS; 25-50 mg IV diluted to at least 1 mg/mL and administered at a rate of 1 mg/minute, usually in conjunction with barbiturates, vary dose according to patient response

Please contact your area pharmacy with any questions you may have.