Report to the Boards of Health

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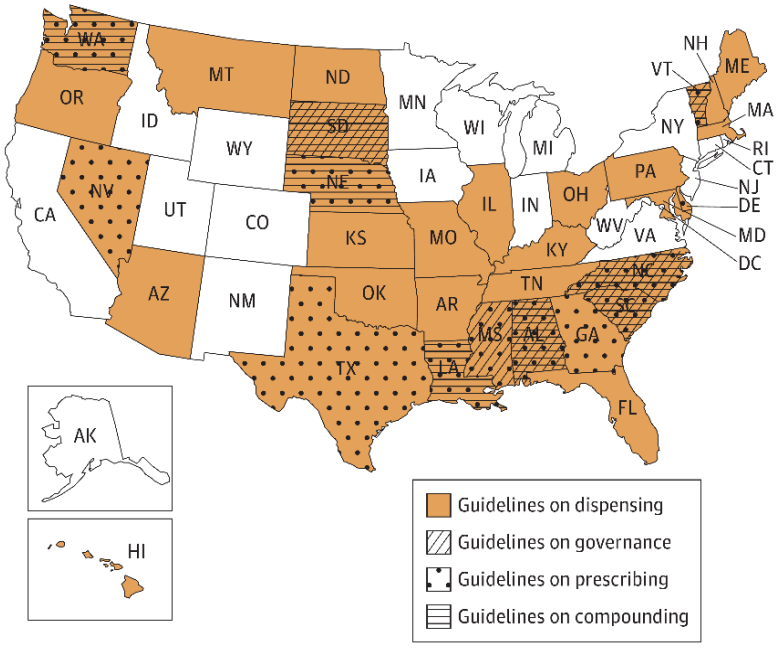
Non-medical IV hydration, vitamin, and drug treatment

Being able to give intravenous (IV) fluids, medicines, blood products, and even nutrition to those in need has allowed major advances in healthcare. Continued advances have made IV therapy easier to perform and made it seem harmless. Around 2010, boutique IV clinics providing "wellness therapy" started to become popular in major cities worldwide, fueled by the use of actors, athletes and other celebrities. In 2025, the North American IV hydration market size was estimated to be $1.35 billion, and it is estimated to nearly double by 2033.

The number of IV hydration and vitamin infusion clinics are also growing in Michigan. Some are located within "medi-spas" or offer mobile or in home IV therapies. They offer IV fluids, vitamins, minerals, and some also offer prescription drugs. The starting cost for most treatments ranges from $100 to $300, not covered by insurance. Michigan is one of 19 states with zero regulatory guidance for this type of industry.

In a national phone survey, only a quarter of these IV medi-spas said they required any medical consultation before treatment, and many recommended specific IV cocktails to callers based on described symptoms without verifying medical history, current medications, or underlying conditions. When directly asked about potential risks or adverse effects of IV therapy, only 24% described any, mainly bruising, bleeding, or local infection.

Figure. State-Level Intravenous Hydration Spa Policies and Regulations for All 50 US States and the District of Columbia[a]



[a]Coded based on the number of oversight categories addressed: governance, prescriber credentials, dispensing practices, and compounding practices, as of June 2024. States represented in white did not have any of the 4 guidelines in place.

Source: JAMA Intern Med.doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2025.5028

Most states have some form of IV hydration spa-related guidance, but it varies widely. Only 4 states (Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Vermont) have policies that address the governance, prescriber credentials, dispensing practices, and compounding practices for these types of facilities. Texas was the first state to pass a law in 2025 requiring that elective IV therapy be administered only by licensed medical professionals (physicians, PAs, nurse practitioners, or registered nurses) under adequate physician oversight. This was spurred by the death of a woman in 2023 after she received concentrated potassium chloride in an IV spa.

Michigan has no laws or regulatory guidance that specifically address IV hydration infusion clinics and relies on general healthcare laws that cannot account for this type of business. Michigan's delegation statute permits physicians to delegate tasks to licensed or unlicensed individuals under their supervision. In practice, medical directors for IV spas may be located far away, available only by phone, and without established treatment protocols. This was the exact scenario in the Texas fatality. Michigan also has no adverse event reporting requirement for IV spas. Medical assistants and phlebotomists, who are not authorized to administer IV

medications under Michigan law, could be doing so at some facilities, with no mechanism in place to detect or prevent it.

IV spa websites market their products as able to relieve pain, boost metabolism, increase energy, prevent illness, cure hangovers, and other unsubstantiated claims. They promote their services as safe. However, there are many potential harms, all of which can be serious and potentially fatal.

- Complications from IV placement – The most common risks, includes bruising, bleeding, and infection at the IV site
- Air embolism – Air bubbles can get into the blood stream if the IV catheter (tube) isn't properly managed. Medical facilities use equipment to monitor for air, but most IV spas do not. About 25% of adults have a patent foramen ovale (PFO), which is a small, usually harmless hole in the heart that should have closed at birth, and for these adults, the air bubbles are able to bypass the lungs and travel to the brain or heart, causing stroke or heart attack.
- Fluid overload – Getting too much fluid too fast can cause serious problems, especially in those that may not be aware they have kidney or heart problems. It can also cause a dilution of important electrolytes in the blood, mainly sodium, which can lead to seizures and death.
- Drug risks – Some IV spas offer medications, mainly ondansetron (Zofran), dexamethasone (a steroid), ketorolac (Toradol), and famotidine (Pepcid). All these drugs have risks, contraindication, drug interactions, and side effects. It is important to understand a person's medical history before giving drugs, especially IV, but few IV spas take this information.
- Infection – There have been cases of serious blood infections, called sepsis, from IV spas. The medicines and fluids may be mixed, or compounded, on site and since this is not regulated, there is potential for mistakes and contamination with germs.
- Bad reactions – People have had serious allergic reactions to medications and supplements given in the IV. High doses of vitamin C can be a risk for kidney stones and cause a dangerous breakdown of red blood cells in people who carry a certain gene (called G6PD) and most people do not know if they carry it.

There is also a risk from the misuse of medical resources. The US has faced IV fluid shortages in the past, and using fluids as described in this report while hospitals have to ration their supplies seems irrational.

Recommendations:

1. Support reform in Michigan's oversight of medi-spas and IV hydration clinics. In the interim, if you have concerns a clinic is not operating safely, Michigan's Bureau of Professional Licensing can investigate the provider(s) if you submit a complaint at this link File a Complaint with BPL.
2. If you feel a need to seek medi-spa or IV hydration services, talk with your healthcare provider for their opinion. There may be other options.
3. If you choose to get medi-spa or IV hydration services, consider doing the following:
    a. Research the facility and its providers. Ask about the credentials of qualifications of the medical providers and the staff administering the IV or other treatments you are getting. Ensure they all have an active license for the state of Michigan. It should be hanging in the facility. Ask if you can talk with the doctor supervising the clinic if you have questions or complications. If the answer is no, ask why not as this is a red flag.
    b. Make sure there is a medical evaluation before treatment: a health care provider should ask you about any medications you are taking, your medical history, and ask about any pre-existing conditions or possible pregnancy in women.

c. Be sure you understand the benefits, risks, and reality. The provider should inform you of the risks, benefits, and alternative treatments. If the claims seem too good to be true or misleading, or they say there are no risks or side effects, you should question them.

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