Adrenocorticotropic Hormone Therapy treats infantile spasms. Infantile spasms are a kind of seizure in infants less than 1 year old. ACTH is medicine given by injection (shot) in a child’s leg. Children get this medicine at home. It is usually given for 2 months. Your child’s nurse will teach you to give the injection. This sheet reminds you of what you have learned.

**Supplies You Need**
- Bottle of ACTH
- 1 mL syringe with 5/8” needle
- Alcohol pads
- Second person to hold your child
- Container for used needles

**How to Store ACTH**
Keep ACTH in the refrigerator.

**Getting Ready to Give ACTH**
1. Wash your hands.
2. Get your supplies.
3. Warm the bottle of medicine in your hand.
4. If the bottle has not been opened, “pop” the cap off (take off the cap) by pushing up on the edge with your thumb. Wipe the top with an alcohol pad.
5. Take the cap off the needle. Do not let the needle touch anything. Pull the plunger back to put ____mL of air into the syringe.
6. Push the needle into the rubber stopper on the top of the medicine bottle.
7. Push the plunger all the way in.
8. Leave the needle in the bottle. Turn the bottle upside down.
   Pull back on the plunger until you get a little more than _____mL of ACTH.
9. Check for air bubbles in the syringe. Air bubbles won’t hurt your child, but they decrease how much medicine he gets. Get rid of air bubbles by gently tapping the side of the syringe. This moves air bubbles to the top. Then, push on the plunger to move the air bubbles into the bottle. Pull the plunger back until you have exactly _______mL of ACTH.
10. Take the needle out of the bottle. Do not let the needle touch anything.
Giving ACTH

1. Clean the skin on your child’s thigh with an alcohol pad. Your child’s nurse will show you where to give the shot.
2. Have a second person firmly hold your child’s leg while you give the shot. Change legs each day, i.e. Monday right thigh, Tuesday left thigh.
3. Hold the skin on the leg with 1 hand.
4. Put the needle into the skin with the other hand. Let go of the skin.
5. Pull back on the plunger a little bit. If you see blood in the syringe, pull the needle out of the skin. Put a new needle on. Start again at a new spot.
6. If you see no blood in the syringe, push the plunger in all the way.
7. Pull the needle out of the skin. Put the alcohol pad on top of the spot. Press for a few seconds.
8. **Do Not Recap The Needle.** Put the syringe and needle in a hard plastic or metal container with a tight lid. You could use an empty laundry detergent bottle or coffee can.
9. Take the container to the doctor’s office when it gets full.

**Special Instructions**
- Remember to change legs each day.
- Your child should not have vaccinations until his doctor says it’s OK.
- Keep your child away from sick people.
- Do not let other people give the shot.

Side Effects
- Increased chance for infection
- Thrush in mouth (whitish spots on the inside)
- Rash in diaper area
- Increased appetite
- Water retention/weight gain (Your child will look bloated with full or “chubby” cheeks)
- Stomach irritation, including ulcers
  - Watch for blood in bowel movements (stools)
  - Give Ranitidine (Zantac®) dose ____________
- Fussy or irritable
- Rash on face

Follow Up Care
Your child needs to see a doctor once a week while he gets ACTH. This medicine may cause high blood pressure or an electrolyte imbalance. It is important to check these things at each visit:
- weight
- blood pressure
- blood tests

When to Call
Call the doctor if your child has:
- any side effects
- more seizures

Doctor’s name: _______________________

Call the Pediatric Neurology Office:
Monday-Friday, 8:00am- 4:30pm:
Phone number: _______________________

After hours and on weekends or holidays:
Call 317.944.5000. Ask for the Pediatric Neurologist on call.