

Implanted Port

What is an Implanted Port?

An **implanted port** (*port-o-cath*) is a small, hollow port with a catheter (tube) attached. It is placed just under the skin and can be used to provide fluids, medication, or supplemental nutrition directly to the bloodstream. A port does not need to be removed and can be used over extended periods of time.

Why do I need it?

You likely need an implanted port to receive medication (chemotherapy, antibiotics, etc.), fluids, nutrients, or blood products over the course of several weeks to months.

How is it Done?

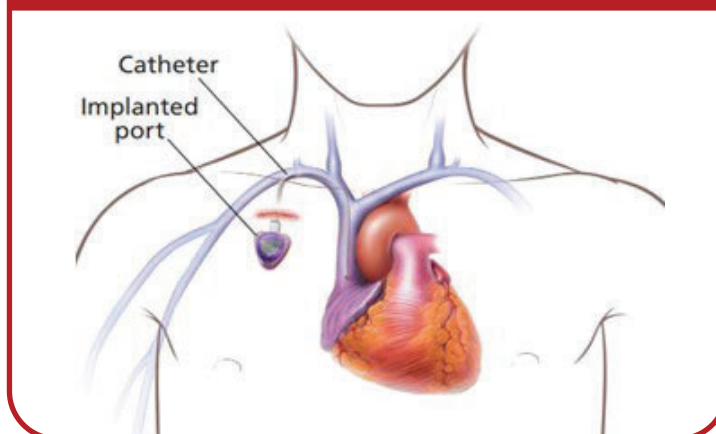
You will first be given a mild sedative to help you feel relaxed throughout the procedure.

Your doctor will place the port in your upper chest, arm, or abdomen. Your doctor will make an opening in the skin, place the port in the opening, and secure the port using stitches. Your doctor will then place a catheter into a large vein, threading it so the tip is located in a large vein near the heart. Your doctor will then close the opening with stitches and cover the incision site with steri-strips (surgical tape).

Your doctor will use fluoroscopy, a specialized x-ray device, to ensure that the catheter is in the right position.

The procedure can take up to an hour to complete. You will not be able to see the implanted port, however there will be a bump underneath your skin where the device was implanted.

An implanted port is placed under your skin. A catheter is threaded from the implanted port through a vein to the heart.



What Happens After The Procedure?

- **You will be given a port information card.** The card will let your healthcare providers know what type of port you have. Your port will also need to be accessed with a special needle that your nurse will tell you about. Write down the length of the needle you need on the card.
- **The area around the stitches may be swollen and sore for a few days.** This is normal. Once the swelling is gone you will be able to see or feel a bump under your skin. This is the port. After the site heals there will be a small scar.
- **Look at the incision (cut) site a few times a day.** Check the port incision site for redness, swelling, pain, a burning sensation, or drainage. If any of these signs are present, call your doctor. There is no special care once the skin heals where the port was placed.

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What Do I Need to Do When I Go Home?

- **Change the needle and dressing regularly.** This should be done by a healthcare professional. Whenever the port is accessed, there will be a special dressing over the area. If the dressing becomes wet, dirty, or loose, the dressing and needle will need to be changed. If the port is accessed for longer than 7 days, the needle and dressing need to be changed every 7 days. When the port is not being used there is no dressing. The nurses will provide you with more detailed information regarding wound care.
- **Be cautious around the area of your port.** Always wash your hands before doing any port care. Don't tug or pull on the port and avoid using scissors around the central line.
- **Flushing the port.** You may need to flush the port with heparin every 30 days.
- **Have 100 extra units of heparin with you at all times; in case the port needs to be removed unexpectedly.**
- **Your doctor and medical team will provide you with very detailed home care instructions.**

Contact your doctor if you experience the following:

- Have a fever over 100.4° F or greater for no known reason
- Redness
- Swelling or pain
- Warmth to touch

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions regarding your port