

# Disconnecting an Elastomeric Infusion Pump from Your Port-A-Cath

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These instructions are provided to help you, family members or caregivers disconnect your pump at home. Your Nurse will review these instructions in person with you before you go home. Always contact your cancer care team if you have any questions about these instructions. you can also review these instructions in video format by visiting: [www.nshealth.ca/epump](http://www.nshealth.ca/epump).

One of the most important things about disconnecting your pump at home is keeping your Port-A-Cath (port) as free from germs as possible. This will reduce your risk of infection. Your port must also be flushed with both saline and a heparin solution after your cancer treatment is finished.

## How to Prevent an Infection:

- Always follow the instructions given to you.
- Always wash your hands with soap and water before and after caring for your port.
- Use only the supplies provided to you by your cancer care team.
- All supplies should be used only once (disposable).
- Wear a mask when caring for your port. If someone is helping, they should also wear a mask.

## When to Disconnect your Elastomeric Infusion Pump:

- Your Nurse will tell you the day and time when your infusion should be finished.
- You will know the pump is finished when the balloon inside the pump is empty.

## How to Disconnect your Elastomeric Infusion Pump:

### Getting Ready

1. Clean the work area with soap and water.
2. Wash your hands with soap and water.
3. Gather your supplies.

### Supplies you will need:

- Alcohol swabs (2)
- 5 mL pre-filled Heparin Lock Flush Solution syringe (1)
- 10 mL pre-filled syringes of 0.9% sodium chloride (saline) (2)
- 2 x 2 Gauze pad (1)
- Band Aid (1)
- Sharps Container (1)
- Gloves (1 pair)



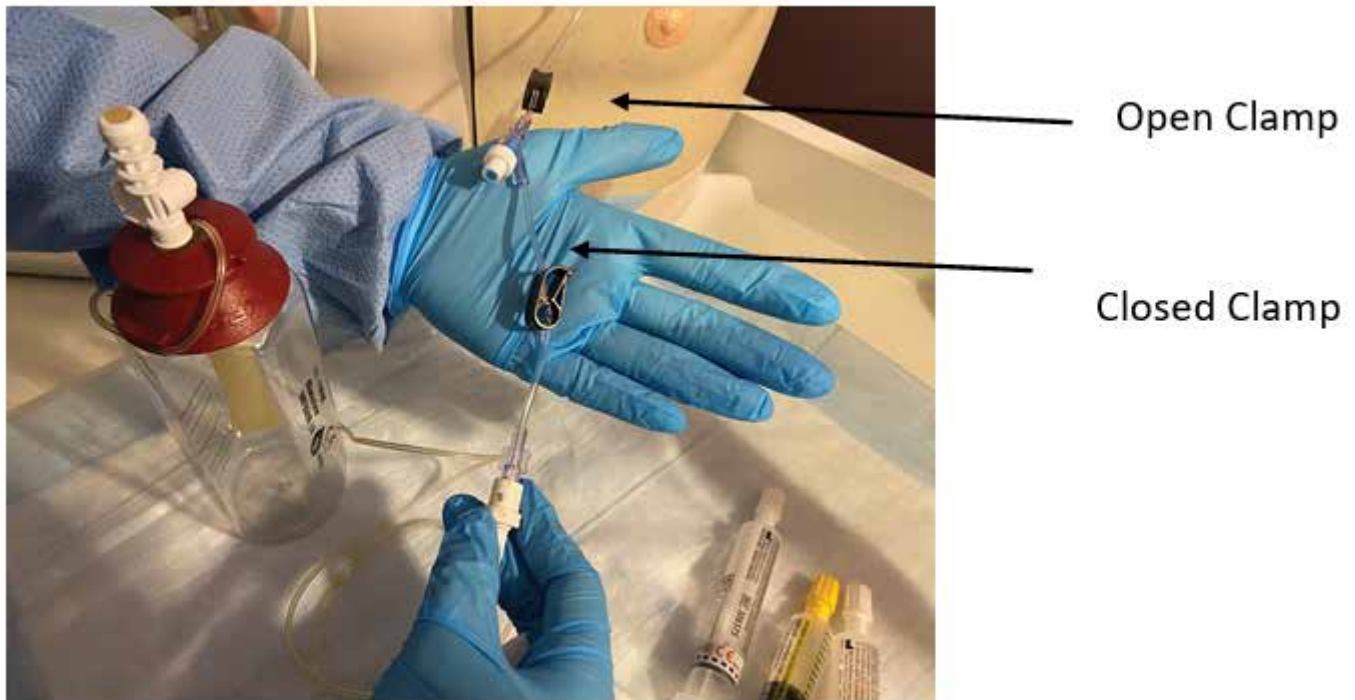
- Mask (2)
- Gown (1)

### Important Points:

- › Your port should flush easily; never use force to flush your port.
- › Never allow air from the syringe to be injected into your port
- › Always check carefully for sensations of pressure, pain or swelling around the site. If you notice any of these during or after the flushing, stop the flushing and contact your cancer care team.

### Disconnecting the Elastomeric Infusion Pump:

1. Put on your gloves and then mask. If someone is helping you disconnect, they should put on the gloves, a gown and then the mask.
2. Remove the tape that holds the white flow regulator against your skin.
3. Close clamp closest to the white flow regulator on the tubing but leave the clamp closest to your port open.



4. Clean the white connector with an alcohol swab using the “juicing motion” taught to you by your Nurse for 15 seconds. Let the port air dry.



#### **Flushing your Port with Saline:**

1. Open the saline syringe package and remove the protective cap from saline syringe. Do not touch the tip of the syringe.
2. With the syringe tip pointing up, gently push up on the plunger to expel any air.
3. Connect the saline syringe to the open connector.



4. Gently pull back on the syringe until you see a small amount of blood in the tubing.

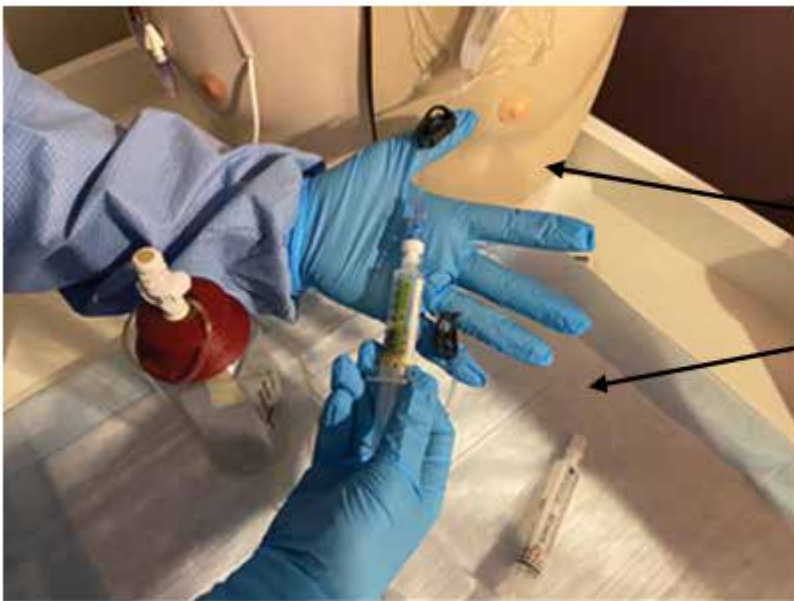
*If you do not see blood in the tubing when pulling back on the syringe but are still able to flush easily, continue with procedure and tell your cancer care team at your next appointment.*

5. Inject 10 mL of saline using an intermittent push/stop/push motion (quickly inject a small amount of saline, pause, then inject again and repeat until all the saline has been injected).
6. During the last 1 mL of saline, close the clamp on the tubing.
7. Repeat Steps 1 through 6 with a second 10 mL saline syringe.

*If you are not able to flush your port, please contact your cancer care team.  
If it is a weekend or holiday, go to your nearest emergency department.*

#### **Flushing your Port with Heparin:**

1. Clean the white connector with a new alcohol swab using the “juicing motion” taught to you by your Nurse for 15 seconds. Let the port air dry.
2. With the syringe tip pointing up, gently push up on the plunger to expel any air.
3. Attach the heparin syringe to the white connector.
4. Flush with 5 mL of heparin, using the same push/stop/push motion described above. During the last 1 mL of heparin, close the clamp on the tubing.



**Both Clamps  
are Now Closed**

5. Remove heparin syringe from port.

**Removing the elastomeric infusion pump and needle from your Port-a-cath:**

1. Holding the needle in place with one hand, remove the dressing and discard.

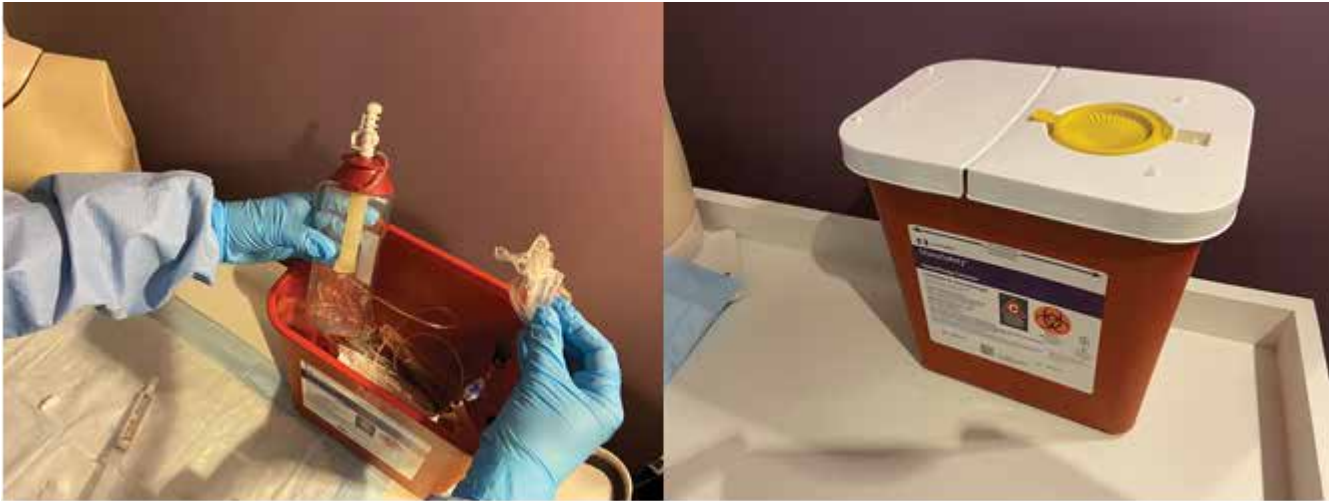


2. With your non-dominant hand, use two fingers to hold the base of the needle (oval piece). Using your dominant hand, pull the needle (rectangle piece) and connected tubing straight up and out of the port. You may hear a clicking sound indicating that the needle has safely locked into place. **Do not disconnect the tubing.**



**Note: You may have a small amount of bleeding at the site. Apply pressure with a gauze pad to stop bleeding.**

3. Apply a Band Aid to site.
4. Place swabs, gauze, needles, syringes, tubing and bottle in the sharps container.
5. Store the sharps container in a safe place (e.g. out of reach of pets/children) and bring to it your Cancer Clinic at your next visit.



6. Remove gloves and gown. Put both items in a plastic bag.
7. Wash hands well with soap and water, remove mask and add it to the plastic bag.
8. Wash your hands again with soap and water.
9. Double bag gloves, gown, mask and any other remaining supplies. Dispose with your regular household waste.

If you have questions, call your cancer care team:

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### Looking for more health information?

Find this brochure and all our patient resources here: <http://library.nshealth.ca/cancer>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

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*Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!*

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[www.nshealth.ca](http://www.nshealth.ca)

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The information in this brochure is for informational and educational purposes only.

The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice.

If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider. The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.

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