

Implanted Vascular Access Device (IVAD or “port”)

My surgery will be at:

Hospital: _____

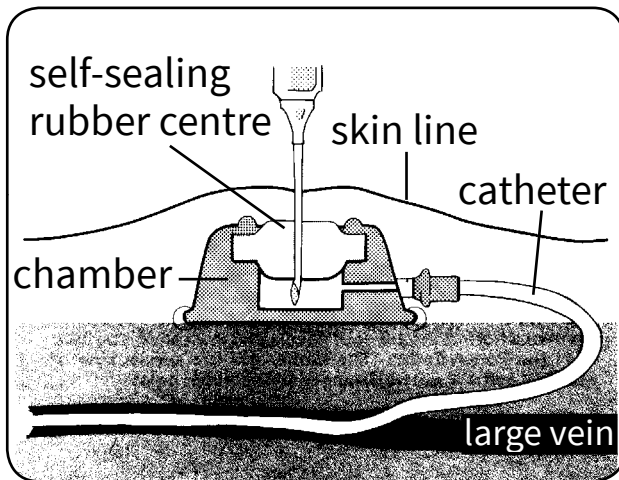
Date: _____

Time: _____

Implanted Vascular Access Device (IVAD or “port”)

What is an implanted vascular access device (IVAD)?

- An implanted vascular access device (IVAD) is a small device that goes into a large vein just above your heart. This makes it easier to give you intravenous (IV) medications and to take blood samples. It is also called a “port” or “port-a-cath.”
- A port is placed under your skin below your collarbone. You may see or feel a round or triangle-shaped bump where the port is.



The IVAD has 2 parts:

1. There is a small port which has a self-sealing rubber centre made to withstand repeated punctures from a special needle called a “gripper” or “Huber”.
2. A catheter (thin, flexible tube) is firmly attached to the port. The catheter is then placed into a vein. The tip of the catheter is placed in a vein just above your heart.

What are the benefits of using an IVAD?

- It can be used to give you IV medications and to take blood samples.
- It can stay in place for 5 years or more.
- It lets you use your arms normally in all your daily activities.
- There is no special care of the port when it is not being used.

How does a port work?

When an infusion is given, the nurse will use a special needle (called a “gripper” or “Huber”). The needle is inserted through the skin into the rubber centre of the port. The medication or fluid flows through the needle into the port, through the catheter, and into your bloodstream.

How do I get ready to have my port inserted?

- Do not eat or drink after midnight the night before your appointment.
- Your family health care provider will review your medications with you and give you specific instructions if any changes are needed. There are specific medications (e.g., blood thinners) that have special instructions for taking them before surgery. Please include all over-the-counter medications (including herbal products) when you review your list of medications with your health care provider.
- If you are an outpatient, follow your family health care provider's instructions for when to come to the hospital for your surgery.

How will my port be inserted?

- We will tell you where your surgery will take place (e.g., Interventional Radiology suite near the Operating Room (OR), in the OR, etc.).
- The area where your port will be inserted will be frozen with a local anesthetic (numbing medicine) so you will not feel any pain. You will be awake during the surgery.
- The doctor may give you medicine to help you relax.

- 2 small incisions (cuts) will be made in your upper chest.
- An X-ray will be done to make sure the port is in the right place.
- The surgery will take about 1 hour.

What will happen after surgery?

- If you are an outpatient, we will watch you closely for about 1 hour before you can go home. **You must have someone take you home.**
- If any followup is needed, contact your family health care provider.

At home

- The area around the port may be bruised, swollen, and tender for a few days. This is normal and should go away in about 1 week.
- You may take the dressing off after 48 hours (2 days). Steri-Strips™ will fall off on their own in 7 to 10 days.
- Follow your surgeon's instructions for showering and/or bathing.
- A port can be used right away unless you have a lot of bruising or swelling.

Taking care of your port

As long as your family health care provider says it is OK, you can keep doing your usual activities.

Watch for signs of infection

Call your family health care provider if you have:

- › a fever over 38° C/100.4° F
- › redness
- › pain
- › drainage from the incision site (s).

Flushing

Your port must be flushed every 4 weeks to keep the catheter open. Your family health care provider will arrange this for you.

Identification (ID)

You will be given a wallet-size info card. **Always keep this card with you. You should wear a MedicAlert® bracelet or necklace.**



If you have any problems or questions, call:

Doctor: _____

Phone: _____

If your surgeon or family health care provider is not available, go to the nearest Emergency Department.

