

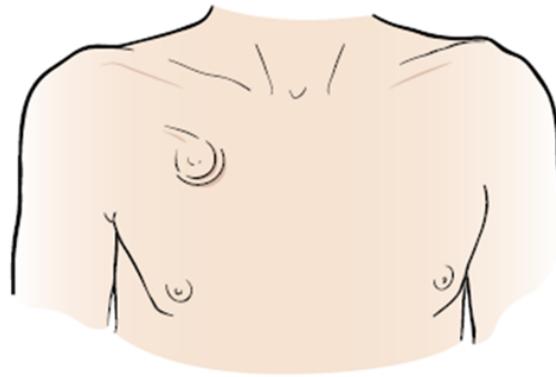
Implanted Port Care

What is an Implanted Port?

An implanted port (also known as a “port”) is a flexible tube that’s placed into a vein in your chest. It will make it easier for your healthcare team to:

- Give you intravenous (IV, through a vein) medication.
- Give you IV fluids.
- Take blood samples.
- Give you medications continuously for several days. Sometimes medications must be given in a vein larger than the ones in your arms. The port lets the medication go into your bloodstream through a large vein near your heart.

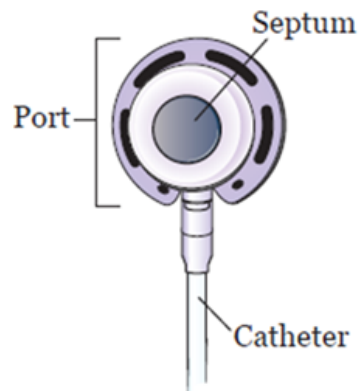
Implanted ports are usually placed about 1 inch (2.5 centimeters) below the center of your right collarbone. If you wear a bra, your implanted port will be about 1 inch from where your bra strap lies.



Types of implanted ports

All implanted ports are made up of 2 parts: the port with a septum and a catheter.

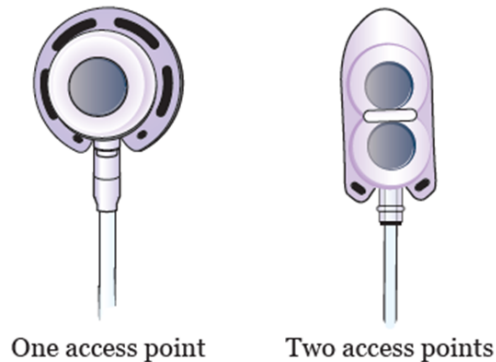
- The port is the starting point of fluid flow through the catheter. It sits under your skin and has a raised center called a septum. The septum is made from a self-sealing rubber material. This is the part of the port where needles will be placed. This is also called the access point.
- The catheter is a small, plastic, flexible tube. One end of the catheter is connected to the port and the other end sits in a large vein near your heart.



Implanted Port Care

There are 2 types of implanted ports:

- A single lumen port is a port with 1 access point (see Figure 3). Most people will get a single lumen port.
- A double lumen port is a port with 2 access points (see Figure 3). You can put a needle in each access point. Double lumen ports are used for people that regularly need more than 1 point of access.



Most implanted ports will be the size of a nickel or a quarter. They can be circular, oval, or triangle shaped. Your doctor will choose the one that's best for you and your treatments. Your port may be called a BardPort®, a Mediport®, a PowerPort®, or a Port-A-Cath®.

Power-injectable ports

Most implanted ports are made to be used during imaging tests, such as computed tomography (CT) scans or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), to allow for high speed injections (shots) of contrast. These implanted ports are called power-injectable ports.

How is the Port Placed?

Your port will be put in during a short surgery in the operating room. It is usually done under local anesthesia. Local anesthesia numbs the part of the body being worked on. The surgeon will make a small cut into the area where the port will go. He or she will put the port just under your skin. A small flexible tube called a catheter is attached to the port. The tip of the catheter will be put into the large vein leading to your heart.

How Does the Port Work? How the Port Works

Your port will look like a small, raised area under your skin. The center of the disk is raised. This is called the septum. Fluids are put into or taken out of the port using a special needle that goes into the septum. Most patients feel a mild pricking when the needle goes into their skin over the septum.

The catheter connects to the septum. The catheter takes the medicine or fluids right into the blood. Blood for lab tests can also be taken out through the catheter. When the needle is removed from the septum, no fluids or blood can leak out. The port can be used on the same day it is put in.

Implanted Port Care

Caring for Your Port

If you stay in the hospital, a nurse will take care of your incision and implanted port. At first, your small incision will have adhesive strips (i.e. Steri-Strips™) on it. It will be covered with a small bandage. The adhesive strips stay in place until the incision heals. The incision should heal in about 5 to 7 days. After that, you do not have to wear a bandage except when the port is being used for a continuous infusion. A bandage will be used to keep the needle steady and protected while it is being used.

If you are going home after your port is inserted, your nurse may set up a home-care nurse visit. If you do not need a home-care nurse, you will get directions and special training for your port. For the first 24 to 48 hours after surgery, the area around your incision will be tender and a little red. You should call your doctor if this doesn't improve. You should also call your doctor if you have severe pain, a fever of 100.5 F or above, bleeding, or swelling.

After surgery, you will get a manufacturer's medical alert information card. This card has information about your port. You should carry it in your wallet in case you need medical treatment from health care workers who don't know your medical history. You may want to think about buying a MedicAlert® bracelet or necklace. It would give information about your port to emergency health care workers.

How Will the Port Affect My Daily Activities?

Do not do any tiring activities for the first few days after surgery. Make sure you understand and follow any special instructions that your doctor or nurse give you. When your incision is healed, you may go back to normal activities. Check with your doctor or nurse about specific activities such as jogging, swimming, and tennis.

Can I Bathe or Shower?

The bandage must be kept dry until the incision is completely healed. This usually takes 5 to 7 days. You can not take a shower during this time. You can usually take a bath if the port is in your chest, but you have to keep the bandage dry. You should ask your doctor or nurse for instructions on how you should bathe.

Are There Some Types of Clothes That I Should Avoid?

The clothes that you can wear, and those you may need to stay away from, depend on the location of your port. For example, if your port is in your upper chest, you may have to stay away from some types of bra straps or suspenders. Ask your nurse if you have a question about an item of clothing.

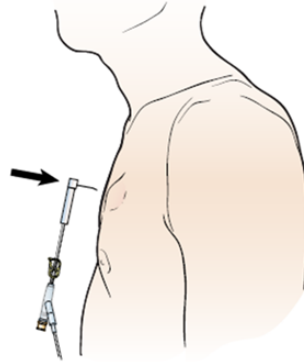
How is the Port Removed?

The port is taken out during surgery. The surgery will be similar to the surgery you had when it was put in. Implanted ports can stay in place for years. Your doctor will remove your port when you don't need it anymore.

Accessing your implanted port

Implanted Port Care

When you need IV fluids or medication, your nurse will place a needle through the access point on your implanted port. This is called accessing your port. The fluid or medication will move from your implanted port through the catheter and into your bloodstream. Don't let anyone who isn't trained in port access to access your port.



Flushing your implanted port

Your implanted port will need to be flushed by a nurse every 4 weeks when it's not being used. This is done to make sure the catheter doesn't become blocked. If it becomes blocked, it may not work anymore and it may have to be removed.

When to Call Your Doctor

Once your incision is healed, call your doctor if you have any:

- Redness
- Swelling
- Drainage
- Fever
- Pain
- Dizziness

You can also call your doctor or nurse if you have any other problems with your port.