

Ports

A port, also known as an Infusaport, is an implanted central venous access device. It is made of two parts; a soft, thin tube, the catheter, which is connected to a small disc-shaped chamber known as the port. The port lies under the skin and can be felt as a small, raised area, usually on the chest or inside the upper arm.

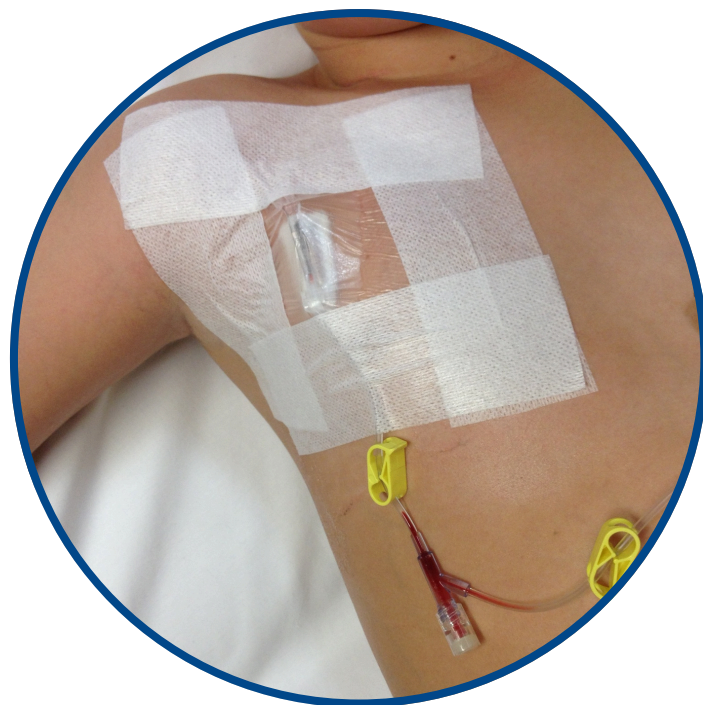
Ports are very useful for frequent or long term intravenous (IV) treatments and can be a good alternative to other IV access because it can stay in place for months, or even years, it offers reliable IV access, has a lower risk of infection and ease of accessibility for blood sampling.

Since the introduction of modulator medication, the need for an infusaport has reduced significantly.

What happens during port placement?

The catheter is inserted into a large vein and the tip of the catheter placed close to the heart. The centre of the port, known as the septum, is where a needle is inserted through the skin to allow access for IV medications, fluids and to take blood.

Once the port is inserted, there will be two dressings; a large clear dressing over the port and a smaller dressing on the neck where the vein is accessed. The port may be stitched in place with dissolvable sutures. Care of the implantation site will be required while the incision heals. Your care team will tell you how and give you pain medication if necessary.



For children, a port is inserted under a general anaesthetic. For adults, it is usually an outpatient procedure under local anaesthetic and with sedation, if required.

How is medication given through a port?

To access your port, a needle is inserted through the skin into the septum by your nurse; this is called 'needling'. Local anaesthetic cream (EMLA) can be applied to the site to reduce pain and discomfort. After a needle is inserted, it will be held in place with a sterile clear dressing to protect it from infection and to keep the port needle secure. The needle can be left in place for up to a week.

General care of the port

You will receive information from the hospital about how to care for the port. This might include keeping the site clean and dry, checking the bungs are secure and having the needle replaced as needed. Follow the guidance of your healthcare team.

Risks associated with a port

While complications related to having a port are rare, you should contact your IV access team, CF health care team or present to the Emergency Department immediately if:

- You have fever, chills or feeling generally unwell.
- There is an ooze around the insertion site, or the skin is red, inflamed or painful.
- The site or the catheter is leaking.
- There is a burning sensation on administration of medication.
- There is resistance to flushing, which may indicate that there is a blockage.
- Aching, swelling or pain in the shoulder, neck or arm, or discolouration between both arms which may indicate a clot.

Call an ambulance if:

- There is a sudden change and/or difficulty in breathing.
- Chest pain or palpitations.
- The person becomes drowsy, pale or floppy.

Useful resources

- [Care of Implanted Devices](#) (PCH)
- [Care of Tunnelled Lines](#) (PCH)
- [CFWA Factsheets](#)