



Portacath Insertion Information

Portacath Insertion

Why are portacaths required?

Portacaths are suitable for people who need regular, long term intravenous treatment including those who need chemotherapy or immunotherapy. Ports may also be used for withdrawing blood for tests, and power ports (the type Canopy Imaging use) can be used for CT and MRI contrast scans.

What is a portacath?

A portacath is a type of central venous line which is a soft, hollow tube that we place into a large vein and leads into the heart. The line can be used to give you fluids, blood products and medicines, and to take blood samples. It is designed to stay in your body for many months or even years.

A portacath is made up of two parts:

1. The catheter

One end of the catheter (hollow tube) sits at the entrance to the heart and the other end is connected to the port.

2. The port

This is a small metal chamber that is implanted underneath the skin in the chest area. A special needle can be inserted through your skin and into the port so you can have your treatment.

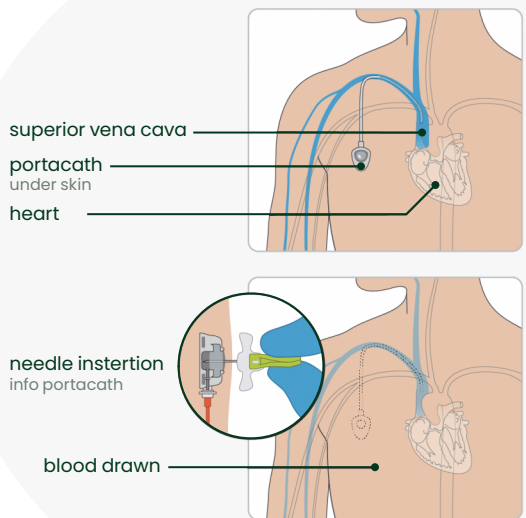
At the end of the procedure, you will see two small scars. One of them is about 1 cm long and is at the base of the neck or just under the collar bone. The other scar is a bit lower down on your chest and is about 3 to 4 cm long. Just underneath this scar you may notice a small bump under your skin, this is the port.

Both scars have dissolvable stitches under the skin – these do not need to be removed.

Prior to your portacath insertion

The procedure takes approximately 45 minutes, this may be longer if sedation is required. You may need to remain for monitoring after the procedure for up to 4 hours.

- A blood test is required
- You will need to fast for 6 hours prior to your procedure
- Medications should have been discussed with you at the time of your booking, if you have any further questions please contact Canopy Imaging to discuss these
- If you have any known allergies to medication/dressings or food please let our bookers know
- You will need to organise for someone to drive you home and ideally be available to stay with you for the first few hours



Informed consent

With any procedure there are risks, these will be discussed with you on the day of your procedure and you will be able to ask any questions you may have. Once you have had the opportunity to ask any questions and have them answered, our doctor will ask you to sign a consent form.

After your procedure

Follow-up

This will usually be with your oncology specialist at Canopy Cancer Care. We will ensure you have a follow up appointment or arrange one for you at the time of your booking for your procedure.

Recovery

- It is important someone is available to drive you home or accompany you in a taxi to go home
- Due to the sedation given for the procedure you may feel lethargic afterwards with reduced concentration. For this reason for 24 hours after your procedure please:
 - Do not drive or operate heavy machinery
 - Do not drink alcohol
 - Do not make any legal decisions or sign legal documents
- You will usually be able to return to work the day after your portacath procedure. This depends on how physical your job is. Please discuss this with your nurse

Exercise while recovering:

Light exercise once you feel able to is fine, but you should avoid strenuous exercise or forceful reaching/stretching to ensure good healing.

In the first few days you may have some tenderness, bruising or discomfort at the incision site, this should be managed with paracetamol and should settle within 2-3 days.

It is important to watch for any of the following signs which may require further management:

- Redness/swelling/soreness
- Leaking of fluid
- Pain
- Shortness of breath
- Temperature over 38 degrees
- Bleeding

Medication

Our team will ensure you understand when to recommence any medication you may have been asked to stop temporarily.

Looking after the wound

The nurse will run through with you how to look after your dressing of the incision site.

Dissolvable sutures are used, and these usually dissolve in 1 week. It is important to keep the dressing on for 1 week to ensure good healing.

We will give you extra dressings so this can be replaced if it gets wet or soiled.

If the port needs to be used before the sutures have dissolved, the nurse will redress the wound after use.

- Avoid baths, spas or swimming while the wound is healing (10 days)
- Always inspect the dressing before you get in the shower to check the edges are sealed

CT/MRI Scans

Canopy Imaging only inserts power injectable ports which can be used for CT and MRI scans, for injection of contrast.

Please advise when booking your CT/MRI scan that you have a port for extra time to be booked.

How to look after your port

- Only allow people who have been trained to use a port to access or deliver treatment through it
- When the port is accessed, make sure the dressing remains dry. Below waist baths or showers or shower over back can help
- If the port site becomes red or sore contact Canopy Cancer care or the oncall oncologist
- If the dressing becomes wet, contact Canopy Cancer or Canopy Imaging to have it replaced
- When the port is not being used, it needs to be accessed and flushed every 12 weeks to ensure the portacath does not get blocked, this will be organised with Canopy Cancer Care

Important phone numbers If you have any questions please contact:

Canopy Cancer Care Monday to Friday 8am to 4:30pm **09 623 6009** or

Canopy Imaging Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm **09 487 2555**

If outside of these hours, please contact the on-call oncologist on **021 777 190**

Discharge

Procedure date _____

Doctor _____

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Peripheral IV line removed | ☐ Wound checked prior to discharge |
| ☐ Portacatch left accessed? | ☐ Port make and model card given |
| ☐ Chest x-ray booking confirmed | ☐ After care discussed and key contacts, after care pamphlet given |

Medication instructions:

If you have any questions regarding your medications, please contact: _____

Given to take home:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Wound care dressings | ☐ Portcath booklet from manufacturer |
| ☐ Portcath ID card | |