



## **Your Central Venous Access Device (PORT)**

This handout offers information about your Central Venous Access Device. It is important that you and your family member/partner-in-care read this handout. You will also need to read the brochure you were given called “Xcela Plus Port: A Patient’s Guide.”

### **What is a Central Venous Access Device?**

A central venous access device is also called a PORT. A PORT is a small medical device that is placed just under the skin on your chest. It is smaller than a loonie. Tubing from this device is put into one of your large veins. Medications or intravenous fluids can be given to you through your PORT. Your PORT may be inserted on the right or left side of your chest.

### **This is what a PORT looks like after it has healed**



### **Having your PORT inserted**

Your appointment is on \_\_\_\_\_ (date) at \_\_\_\_\_ (time). You need to check in at the reception desk of the Diagnostic Imaging Department. This Department is located in the N wing on the main level of the hospital.

You will be in the hospital for 2 to 3 hours. You will be given medication(s) that will help you relax and make you sleepy. You will be lying on a stretcher while your PORT is being inserted.

It is important for you to follow all the instructions in this handout.

### **Before your PORT is inserted**

1. If you are taking a blood thinning medication, ask your oncologist if you need to stop it before you have your PORT put in.
2. Do not drink any alcohol for 24 hours before your PORT is inserted.
3. Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before your PORT is inserted. You can take your regular medications with a sip of water.

### **On the day your PORT is inserted**

1. Take your regular morning medications with a small sip of water.
2. Have someone drive you to the hospital. You will need to have an adult with you when you leave the hospital.

### **After your PORT is inserted**

1. Do not drive any vehicle for the first 24 hours. You must have an adult drive you home. An adult needs to stay with you for the first 24 hours.
2. Do not make any financial or legal decisions for the first 24 hours.
3. If your oncologist or nurse told you to stop taking your blood thinner(s), start taking it again the night after your PORT is inserted. If there is bleeding from your incision site do not re-start the medication until you talk to your oncologist. Call your family doctor about having your blood work checked. You need to have bloodwork 2 to 3 days after your PORT is inserted.
4. You may have mild pain or discomfort for 1 to 2 days. You will be given instructions about pain medications before you leave the hospital.
5. It is normal to have some pain as your body gets used to having a PORT. This pain should get less until it goes away.
6. You may have mild bruising and swelling where your PORT was inserted. You may have this for 1 to 2 weeks. This is normal.
7. Put an icepack on your incision site to help lessen any swelling. Put the ice pack on for 20 minutes then take it off for 20 minutes. Do this for the first 24 hours while you are awake.
8. Your incision and the dressing must stay dry for 7 days after your PORT is inserted.
9. Call your Primary Nurse at the cancer centre if your dressing becomes wet with any drainage from your incision. Your dressing may need to be changed.
10. Your dressing needs to be removed 7 to 10 days after your PORT is inserted.
11. Do not remove the steri-strips as they should fall off on their own.

12. If you have neck stitches, they need to be removed in 7 to 10 days. You will need to make an appointment with your family doctor to have these removed. The stitches over your PORT will dissolve and not need to be removed.
13. You will be given a Patient Card. Carry it with you at all times. Show it to any healthcare provider before they use or access your PORT.
14. You can return to your normal activities after your PORT site is healed.

**Go to a walk-in clinic or the Emergency Department at the hospital closest to you if you have any of these symptoms:**

- Pain around your PORT site that doesn't go away
- A fever above 38.3° C/100.9°F at any time or above 38.0° C/100.4°F for more than an hour
- Redness of the skin around your PORT site
- Any drainage from your PORT site. This drainage may be yellow, brown or green.
- Any bleeding from your PORT site
- Swelling in your arm or shoulder

You should not have these symptoms before or after your PORT site is healed. If you do, it is important that you go to a walk-in clinic or to the emergency department.

**Having your PORT flushed**

Your PORT is flushed every time it is used. Each time your PORT is deaccessed, your nurse puts a medication called Heparin into it. This flushes out your PORT to stop blood clots from forming in it. If your PORT becomes blocked, it stops medications and fluids from going through it. Your healthcare team will give you the care you need if this happens. Your PORT needs to be flushed every 4 weeks when it isn't being used. It is important that you have an appointment to have this done.

Please tell us if you:

- Regularly take a blood thinning medication
- Have an allergy to Heparin
- Have been told that you have Heparin Induced Thrombocytopenia (HIT)
- Have ever had a blood clot

Tell your healthcare team about this every time your PORT is used.

## What it means to have your PORT accessed or de-accessed

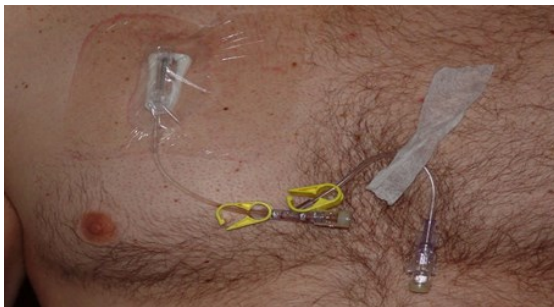
- Accessed - Your PORT is accessed when the needle is in it.
- De-accessed - Your PORT is de-accessed when the needle is not in it.

**It is important** you know what your PORT looks like when it is accessed or de-accessed. The pictures below show you what this looks like.

**This is what your PORT site looks like when it is de-accessed.**



**This is what your PORT looks like when it is accessed.**



Your PORT may be left accessed by a nurse at the hospital if it will be used at home to give you:

- Treatment medications
- Another medication
- Intravenous (IV) fluids

Call your Primary Nurse if your PORT is left accessed and not used for more than 24 hours. **It is important** you do this. Use the phone number your Primary Nurse gave you between the hours of 8:30 am and 4 pm from Monday to Friday. The cancer centre is closed on weekends and holidays. Do not leave a message on the weekend or on a holiday. Go to the Emergency Department at the hospital closest to you if the cancer centre is closed.

**If you have a problem or concern about a symptom or side effect from your cancer treatment:**

1. Call your Primary Nurse at the cancer centre from Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4 pm, (except on holidays). Use the phone number your Primary Nurse gave you.
2. Contact CareChart Digital Health from Monday to Friday, 5 pm to 8:30 am and anytime on weekends and holidays for symptom management support.

Talk to a nurse using one of these options:

- Call the after-hours telephone line at 1-877-681-3057.
- Request a video call by going to [carechart.ca](https://carechart.ca).
- Use the CareChart Digital Health App. This App is available to download for iOS or Android devices.

Call 911 or go to the Emergency Department at the hospital closest to you for a medical emergency. Talk to any member of your healthcare team if you have questions or do not understand any of the information in this handout.

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