



Port-a-cath Discharge Instructions

What is a Port-a-cath?

A port-a-cath is a small, metal disc about the size of a nickel with a slightly raised rubber injection site called the port septum which sits just under the skin. A soft thin tube called a catheter connects the port to a large vein. The septum is made of a silicone material, which reseals itself after each use. The silicone material allows the septum to be punctured hundreds of times with a special needle, and yet retain its integrity. The port allows easy repeated access to the bloodstream for nurses or physicians to draw blood and give medications, nutrients, or contrast. Having a port benefits you by being spared the irritation and discomfort of repeated needlesticks.

Aftercare Instructions

- Rest quietly for the remainder of the day. You should resume normal activities the next day, although avoid strenuous exercise for 48 hours.
- Because of the sedation you received, for the following 24 hours:
 - **DO NOT** drive a car or operate heavy machinery.
 - **DO NOT** drink alcohol.
 - **DO NOT** make important personal decisions or sign legal documents.
 - **DO NOT** be responsible for the care of another person.
- Watch for signs of infection:
 - Increasing pain
 - Fever higher than 101°F
 - Redness, swelling, or drainage from the incision sites
- The skin overlying the port will be swollen and tender, but this irritation should go away as the incisions heal.
- Avoid touching or manipulating the port site as much as possible.
- Resume your normal diet and medications.
- Bandages will be taped over the incisions for the first few postoperative days.
- You may shower 24 hours after your port placement using a watertight dressing. Food wrap (such as Press N Seal) works best. Cover the bandages with the wrap and seal the edges with tape.
 - If super glue was used for closure: keep the incision dry for 3 days with the dressing in place. After 3 days you may remove the dressing and shower as usual. You may immerse in water after 1 week.
- The port may be used immediately, if necessary, or your physician may wait until the swelling has decreased.
- If non-dissolvable sutures were used they can be removed in 14 days. This can be done at your physician's office or you can make an appointment at Teton Radiology to have the nurses remove them.

- You will be given an identification card for your port. You should carry this port patient identification card with you at all times. This card lets medical personnel know you have a power port device that can be used for blood draws and fluid infusions at high rates (power injections).

Please call your ordering doctor or primary care physician if you notice any of the following:

- Significant pain at the site unrelieved by Tylenol
- Hematoma or painful lump around the site
- Fever greater than 100.6°F
- Redness or drainage at biopsy site
- Continued nausea and vomiting

Seek EMERGENCY CARE if you have:

- Chest pain
- Uncontrolled bleeding
- Confusion or change in mental status
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Progressive swelling of any area
- Severe abdominal pain or bloating
- Dizziness or feeling like you are going to pass out

If you have an emergency, go directly to the nearest emergency room or call 911. Do not wait to contact our staff.

Teton Radiology may be reached at (208) 524-7237, or (208) 356-4888 for Rexburg.

(Patient name - Please print)

Your radiologist was:

I understand the above information.

(Patient or family member's signature) Date

Reviewed with me by:

(Technologist or nurse) Date