

Caring for your child's Port at home

What is a port?

A port is a device that can be used over a long period of time to give chemotherapy, blood products, nutrition, fluids, antibiotics, and other medications. The device can also be used to take blood samples.

A port is made up of two parts: a hard walled body with a silicone pad in the middle which attaches to an internal line that threads up to a large vein leading to the heart. This all sits under the skin. When in use the port is needled through the skin into the silicone.



Caring for a port

Your child can go home with a port in place. You will need to care for the port at home by following the below steps:

- When in use a port needle needs to be replaced every 7 days.
- A transparent dressing is preferred and acts to secure the line to your child's chest. It allows for visual inspection of the site. If the edges of the dressing are lifting this requires immediate

medical attention, and the port will require to be re-needed.

- If your child has a skin reaction (eg. redness, itchiness, etc) please let your nurse know, as this can cause damage to the skin.
- When not in use a port needs to be flushed every 6-8 weeks to ensure it keeps working.

Preventing port problems

- Anyone caring for your child will need to learn port line safety and emergency care.
- You will need to keep the port dressing dry. For extra protection during bathing you can cover with cling wrap. Do not go swimming or put the port under water.
- Never use scissors near the tubing or dressing.
- Avoid pulls, knocks or tugs on the port needle or tubing, take extra care when removing clothing.
- Avoid activities that could cause damage to the port, including contact sport, and amusement park rides that cause excessive spinning, twirling, jerking or shaking (these could cause the Port to move).

Port emergency management

What to do if my child's port needle snaps while at home?

- Don't panic. Keep your child calm.
- Wash your hands and remove the dressing over the needle. If you can see the needle, try and grasp it and remove it (this will require a firm pull). Place the needle and any attached tubing into a sharps container or empty glass jar and secure the lid, bring with you to the emergency department.

- If there is bleeding from the wound, cover it with clean hand towel and apply firm pressure over the site.
- The port needs to be re-needled and flushed on the same day to prevent it becoming blocked.
- Go to the emergency department for review and management, they can contact the Children's Ward nurses if required.

What do I do if the bung comes off my child's port?

- Don't panic. Keep your child calm.
- If there is a clamp on the line, close the clamp and cover the end with clean gauze or a clean tissue. Go to the emergency department for review and management.
- It is likely the port will need to be re-needled.

What to do if my child's port needle falls out or is pulled out accidentally?

- Don't panic. Keep your child calm.
- If there is bleeding from the wound cover it with a clean towel and place firm pressure over the site.
- Place the port needle and any attached tubing into a sharps container or empty glass jar and secure the lid, bring with you to the emergency department.
- The port needs to be re-needled and flushed on the same day to prevent it becoming blocked.

Signs and symptoms of infection

Fever

Any fever greater than 38.5 degrees OR 38 degrees TWICE (measured 1 hour apart).

Sweating, shivering or fever

Sweating or shivering, complaining of feeling hot or cold or flushed appearance, can indicate an infection even if there is no fever.

If your child develops a fever, shivers or chills after flushing the port this should be reported immediately as it may indicate an infection in the line.

Redness, swelling or site hot to touch

Please inform your treating hospital of any redness, swelling, discomfort at or around the site port. Or the site is hot to touch.

If your child is really sick call an ambulance immediately on 000.

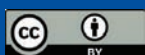
If you have any concerns, during office hours contact:

Name: _____

Number: _____



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