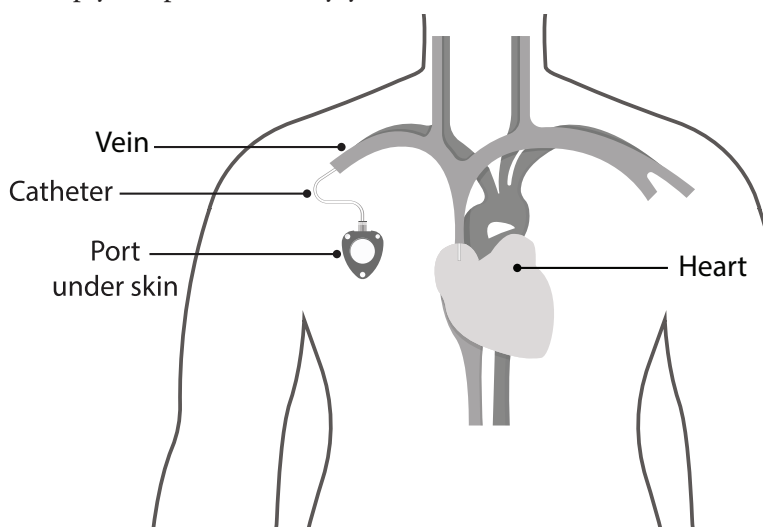


What is a port?

A port is a small, round disc that a surgeon places under your skin. Usually, the surgeon will place it in the upper part of your chest. The port connects to a small tube that goes into a large vein.

The port lets you get blood draws, chemotherapy infusions, and blood transfusions without having an IV needle in your arm every time. It can make the process easier for you and your care team. You can keep your port for many years if needed.



Port Placement in the Upper Chest

How is the port placed?

A surgeon will place your port in the hospital. It is a minor procedure and you do not need to stay overnight. You get medicine to numb the area or may get medicine to put you to sleep.

When the port is in place, the surgeon will test to make sure it is working. To do this, the surgeon will put a special needle called a Huber needle through your skin and into the port. A salt water solution is then flushed through the port and into the catheter.

After, a gauze dressing will cover two small cuts in your skin. The cuts are closed in one of these ways:

- With cloth tape such as Steri-Strips
- With clear surgical glue such as Dermabond

Your cuts are closed with _____

Your surgeon today was _____

How do I take care of my new port?

Follow the instructions below based on how your cuts were closed.

If You Have Cloth Tape

Take the gauze dressing off yourself **48 hours** after the procedure. After 48 hours, you do not need to cover the port area with a dressing if you keep it dry.

For showering, cover the port area with plastic wrap or something to keep it dry for 5 days. You may take a bath, swim in a pool, or soak in a hot tub once the cuts are healed.

Let the cloth tape fall off by itself. Do not pull it off. Do not use ointments or herbal remedies on the area unless your surgeon says it is OK.

If You Have Clear Surgical Glue

Take the gauze dressing off yourself **24 hours** after the procedure. After 24 hours, you do not need to cover the port area with a dressing.

It is OK to shower after 24 hours. You may take a bath, swim in a pool, or soak in a hot tub once the cuts are healed.

Carefully remove loose pieces of the clear glue. Do not pull pieces that are stuck to your skin. Do not use ointments or herbal remedies on the area unless your surgeon says it is OK.

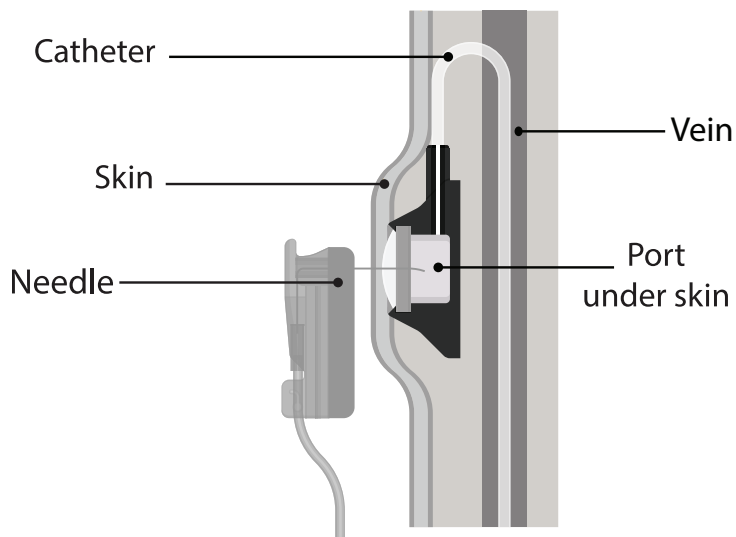
How is the port used?

Once your port is in place, it can be used right away. You don't have to wait for the cuts to heal unless your surgeon says to wait.

If you will get treatment the same day your port is placed, ask your surgeon to leave the Huber needle in for your treatment.

To access your port, your nurse will put a special needle called a Huber needle through your skin and into the port. The nurse will put a dressing over the area to keep it clean during treatment.

If you have pain when your port is accessed, your doctor can prescribe a cream called Emla cream that numbs the area.



Side View of a Port Access

How do I take care of my port?

Your port does not need special care once the cuts have healed. At your clinic visits, a nurse will flush your port and catheter with salt water and a drug called heparin at least once a month.

Heparin helps keep your port free of blood clots.

Let your care team know if you are allergic to heparin.

If you do not visit your clinic or have labs done at least once a month, you must make appointments to have your port flushed.

Without flushing, your port may not work properly and can cause issues.

Please make sure to have your port flushed at least once a month.

When and how is the port removed?

When your treatment is complete, you and your doctor decide the best time to have your port taken out. A surgeon will remove the port by numbing the area and making a small cut near the port to take it out. The cut is then closed and covered with a dressing.

Tips to Prevent Infection

Here are ways to take care of your port and help prevent infection:

- Do not leave the gauze dressing on longer than instructed above (48 hours if you have cloth tape and 24 hours if you have surgical glue).
- If you have cloth tape closures, cover them with plastic when showering. Wet tape can cause infection.
- If you have treatments or tests outside of Huntsman Cancer Institute, be sure the staff has experience with ports. If not, it is safer if they access your vein with an IV instead.
- Make sure medical staff who access your port follow sterile procedures:
 - Wash hands or use hand sanitizer right before caring for you
 - Wear a mask and gloves while getting ready to access your port
 - Scrub the access point with an alcohol swab for 15 seconds before inserting the special needle
 - Put a sterile dressing over your port area once the needle is in place (a mask and gloves are not required after the dressing is in place)

When should I call my doctor?

Call right away if you have any of these:

- Pain, redness, or swelling around the port
- Chills or fever above 100.3° F
- Dizziness or breathlessness
- Swelling, tenderness, or redness in your neck or arm

Contact Numbers

Doctor _____

Nurse _____

Phone _____

PA or NP _____

Phone _____

After hours or weekends: Call 801-587-7000 and ask for the cancer doctor on call.