

The background features a large, light orange triangle in the upper left corner, a large, light blue triangle in the lower left corner, and a vertical strip of three overlapping hexagons (blue, red, and teal) on the right side. Small grey dots are scattered across the top half of the page.

Health Facts for You



**Caring for your
child's implanted port**

Your Child's Central Venous Access Device

A central venous access device (CVAD) or central line is a tube that is placed into your child's vein. This vein can be found in the arm, groin, leg, neck or chest. The purpose of the tube is to give medicine or nutrition. It can also be used to draw blood.



Implanted Port

An implanted port is implanted under the chest skin. It is about a half inch thick and about the size of a quarter. You can feel its raised center under the skin. A flexible piece of tubing (catheter) is connected to it. The catheter is tunneled under the skin to an area near the neck where it enters a vein.

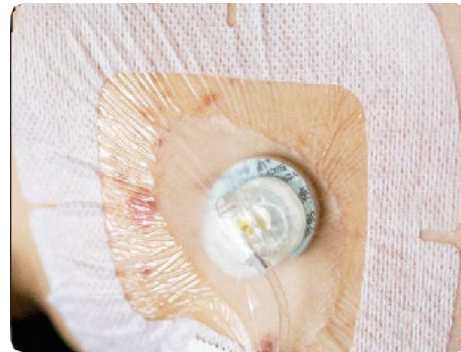
The center of the port is made of a tough, self-sealing, rubber-like material (septum) that can be punctured through the chest skin with a special needle many times. Each time the septum will reseal right away.

How a Port Works

A special needle is used to "access" the port to give medicine. The needle (called a Huber® needle) will be inserted into the port through a layer of skin.

When a port needs to be accessed, we can put a special numbing cream on the skin over the port.

When the port is accessed, the needle is covered with a dressing. The needle and dressing are changed once a week.



Picture of an accessed port

Deaccessed Port

When your child is done with their medicine or hospital stay, the needle can be removed or "deaccessed."

Ports need to be accessed and flushed every 30 days. This helps to keep the line open and free of blood.



Picture of a deaccessed port

Advantages to a Port

- When the port is not accessed, there are no tubes outside of the body.
- If used properly, there is a lower risk of infection than other types of central lines.
- Your child can take baths and swim when the port is not accessed.
- The port can stay in for a long period of time.

Power Injectable/Non-Power Injectable

You will be given a card with this information and your provider or nurse can tell which type your child has.

- **A power injectable port** can be used for injecting contrast dye for radiologic studies.
- **A non-power injectable port** cannot be used to inject contrast dye and an IV would need to be placed.

General Information

A central line increases your child's risk for an infection. A central line associated blood stream infection (CLABSI) is an infection that occurs by germs entering your child's bloodstream through their central line.

Preventing Infections in the Hospital

To reduce the risk of infection with a central line in the hospital, we will:

- Wear a mask, hat, sterile gown and gloves when the central line is inserted.
- Wear a mask and sterile gloves when accessing the port.
- Clean the needleless connector when giving medicines or drawing blood from the central line.
- Wear clean gloves whenever touching the central line or dressing.
- Keep the dressing over the central line clean and dry.
- Change the tubing attached to the central line at scheduled times.
- Limit the number of times we need to draw blood or give medicines through the central line.
- Decide each day if the central line is still needed and remove when it is no longer needed.

Preventing Infections at Home

To reduce the risk of infection at home, you should:

- Wash your hands and put on clean gloves when caring for the central line and handling any supplies.
- Keep tubing off floor.
- Keep line out of diaper area.
- Not allow children to chew on the line or put the end in their mouth.

Bathing

Bathing and showering are important to the care of your child's central line. If your child's port does not have a needle in place or is de-accessed, it is ok to bath or shower as usual.

If your child's line is accessed with a needle:

- Always cover the central line to keep it dry even if you will be changing the dressing afterwards.
- Use extra plastic cover to help to keep water from getting into the dressing or into the lumens. Some examples include: Glad Press'n Seal[®], a clean plastic bag or a product such as Aquaguard[®].
- Limit the amount of water in the tub to help keep the dressing and/or tubing out of the water.
- Keep the water spray from the shower on the back of your child. This will help the soap run away from the central line site and lumens.

Activity

Everyday activities are allowed. Your child should avoid rough play and contact sports. Talk with your doctor about specific restrictions.

Once the port incision is healed, it is okay to swim if port is deaccessed.

Putting Numbing Cream on the Port Site (Optional)

1. Apply clean gloves.
2. Place a small amount of cream over the port site.
3. Rub cream into skin for about 30 seconds.
4. Add a small “bubble” of extra cream on top of the area.
5. Apply a transparent dressing (Tegaderm).
6. Allow the cream to sit on the skin for 30 minutes.

Common Problems and Emergencies with a Central Venous Catheter	
Sign or Symptom	What to do
- Fever of 100.4° (38.0°) or higher - Chills, fatigue or a decrease in activity. - Swelling, warmth, tenderness, redness, pain, oozing, odor or drainage at the port site	Call doctor or nurse right away.
Leaking of fluids, visible hole or break in catheter	Do not use the central line. If the central line is leaking, clamp the line with the clamp on the line or a hemostat between the child and the leak. - Cover the break or leak with sterile gauze. - Call doctor or nurse right away.
Catheter falls out	- If the central line falls out, apply pressure right away with a sterile gauze pad to the exit site for about five minutes. Then, place a transparent dressing over the gauze on the exit site. - Call doctor or nurse right away.
Catheter will not flush or draw blood	Do not force fluid into the catheter. - Make sure catheter is unclamped. - Make sure there are no kinks or twist along the catheter or under the dressing. - Pull back on syringe gently to draw back blood. If blood is visible, attempt to flush again. - If unable to flush catheter or get a blood return, Call doctor or nurse.
Needleless Connector comes off catheter.	- Scrub open catheter end with alcohol pad for 15 seconds and allow to dry for 5 seconds. - Place new needleless connector.
Skin Issues- irritation, open skin	Notify your doctor or nurse to discuss different dressing or cleanser options.
Swelling of chest, neck, face or arm	- Stop infusion into catheter. - Call doctor or nurse right away.
Shortness of breath or complains of chest pain	This is an emergency! - Make sure the catheter is clamped right away. Lay child down on left side. - Call 911 for help right away.

Your Child's Catheter and Home Supplies

Who to Call

Clinic: _____

Doctor/Nurse who manages the line and orders supplies: _____

Home Care Agency

When you are discharged from the hospital, supplies and equipment will be delivered by your home care agency. To reorder supplies, contact your home care agency.

Home care agency: _____

Phone number: _____

Home health nurse (if applicable): _____

Phone number: _____

Catheter Information

Company/Brand: _____

Model number: _____

Size: _____

French line measurement (cm): _____

Is the catheter power injectable? YES NO

If no, the catheter cannot be used for Radiology studies that use IV contrast.

Dressing Information

Dressing: _____

Securement device: _____

Cleaning agent: _____

Other

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 12/2023 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing HF#8315.