Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Instructions After Your Procedure to Remove Your Implanted Port or Central Venous Catheter (CVC)

This information explains how to care for yourself after your procedure to remove your implanted port or CVC. In this resource, the words “you” and “your” refer to either you or your child.

Manage your pain

If you have pain, you may be able to take pain medicine to relieve it. Follow your healthcare provider’s instructions. Call your healthcare provider if you still have pain after taking the medicine.

If your healthcare provider used local anesthetic, it’s normal for the area to be numb for a few hours afterward. Local anesthetic is medicine to numb an area of your body during your procedure.

Care for your dressing

After your procedure, the area where your implanted port or CVC used to be will be covered with a dressing (bandage). Leave the bandage on for 24 hours (1 day) after your procedure.

You may also have sutures (stitches), Steri Strips™ (thin strips of paper tape), or Dermabond® (surgical glue) under the bandage. If you have sutures, they will dissolve on their own and don’t need to be removed. Steri-Strips or Dermabond will start to peel off on its own after about 7 to 10 days. If it has not fallen off after 10 days, you can take it off.

The area where your implanted port or CVC was will be healed about 6 to 8 weeks after your procedure.

Instructions for showering

Do not shower for 24 hours (1 day) after your procedure. Keep your bandage clean and dry.

After 24 hours, you can remove your bandage and shower. There may be a small amount of blood on the bandage. This is normal. If you are bleeding, call your healthcare provider.

Wash the area gently with soap and water. Rinse your skin well. After your shower, pat your skin dry with a soft, clean towel. You do not need to put on another bandage.

For 1 to 2 weeks after your procedure, do not:

- Take a bath.
- Go in a pool.
- Submerge the area where your implanted port or CVC used to be.

Your healthcare provider will tell you how long to avoid these things.

Activities

You can go back to your regular diet after your procedure.
Do not lift anything heavier than 10 pounds (4.5 kilograms) for 3 days after your procedure.

If you had an implanted port, do not play any contact sports for 6 to 8 weeks after your procedure. This includes football or soccer. If you need a note for school or work, ask your healthcare provider.

When to call your healthcare provider

Call your healthcare provider if you have:

- Any discharge or bleeding from the area where your implanted port or CVC used to be.
- Redness that's getting worse.
- Swelling.
- Bruising.
- A fever of 100.4 °F (38.0 °C) or higher.
- Pain that does not get better with medicine.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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