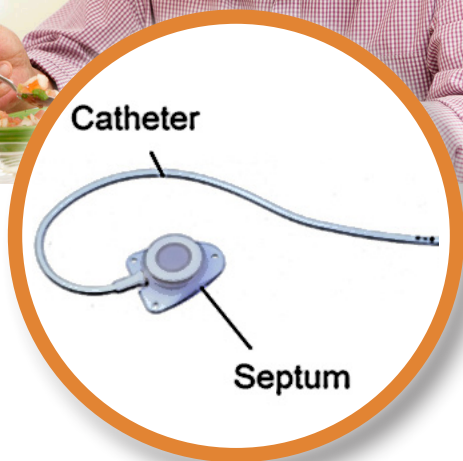


Your IVAD (Implanted Venous Access Device)



Treatment — Systemic

Implanted Venous Access Device

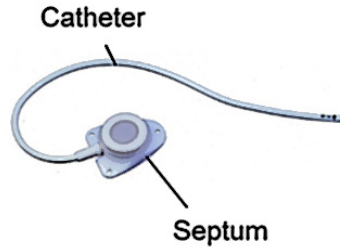
What is an Implanted Venous Access Device (IVAD)?

An IVAD is a device used to carry medications into your bloodstream. The word “implanted” means that the device is placed under your skin.



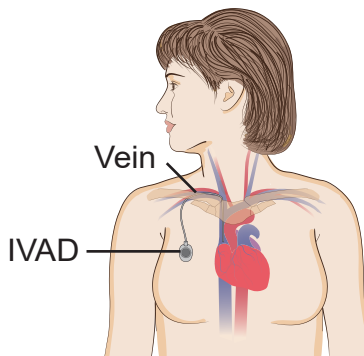
An IVAD may also be called a “port”, a “port-a-cath”, or a “central line”.

- The IVAD is a small disk that has a raised centre or septum.
- The septum is where the needle is inserted to give medications or take blood.
- The catheter is a small tube that carries the medication from the IVAD to the vein.



Will I be able to see my IVAD?

Since the IVAD is placed under your skin, you will not see it. But, you may see and feel a small bump under your skin.



Will the IVAD affect what I can do?

Daily care for the IVAD is not usually needed and it does not affect your normal activities. You should not play contact sports. The IVAD also will not set off metal detectors.

Where will my IVAD be placed?

The doctor will insert your IVAD under the skin of your chest.

The end of the catheter is inserted into a large vein in your chest and threaded to just above the heart. An IVAD can be left in place for many months to years. You will need your IVAD while you are receiving treatments. You can ask your healthcare team how long you will need the IVAD.

You may wish to wear a medical alert bracelet saying that you have an IVAD.

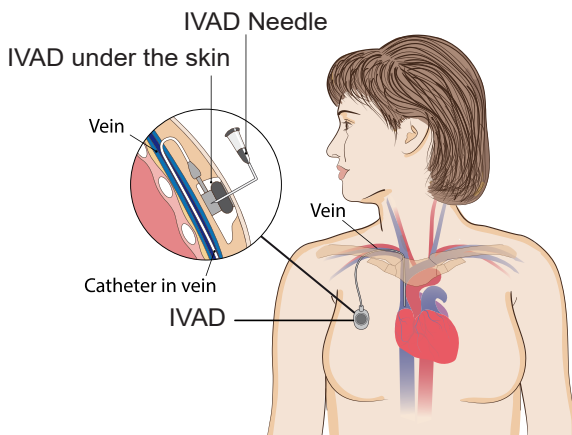
How does the IVAD work?

The IVAD makes it possible for you to have many treatments without having to put a needle into your vein each time.

An IVAD can be used to give you:

- Systemic treatment like chemotherapy
- Medications
- Blood products and other fluids

A special needle is placed through the septum of the IVAD which connects to the catheter. You should feel only a mild prick when the needle is inserted. This pricking feeling may decrease over time.






What happens after my treatment?

After you receive a treatment, your IVAD and catheter will be flushed and locked with a prescribed solution. This will prevent clots from forming in your catheter.

The IVAD must be flushed and locked every 30 days if it is not being used. A health professional will do this for you.

Inserting the IVAD

What can I do to prepare to get my IVAD?

-  Arrange for a ride home from the procedure.
-  Let your doctor know if you are taking blood thinners.
-  Follow the directions you were given for eating and drinking.

Who will insert my IVAD?

Your IVAD will be inserted by a doctor in the X-Ray department. You will need to sign a consent form. When you sign the consent form, it means you agree to having the procedure.

What can I expect during the procedure?

- The care team will let you know how long it will take.
- The nurse will use sterile cloths to cover the area of your body where the IVAD will be inserted to help prevent infection.
- You will be awake for the procedure but a doctor will freeze the area where the IVAD will be inserted.
- 2 small cuts, called incisions, will be made, one just below the neck, and one on the chest.
- You may feel some pressure when the IVAD is inserted under the skin.
- Once the IVAD is in place, the cuts will be closed with stitches and covered with steri-strips and a dressing.
- You will have a chest x-ray to make sure that the IVAD is in the right place.

Caring for Your IVAD

Stitches:

The stitches for the cuts just below your neck and on your chest will likely be dissolvable and will not need to be removed.

The dressing:

You will wear a dressing over both cuts for 24 to 48 hours. After this time, you can remove your dressing but keep the steri-strips on. The steri-strips will fall off on their own.



If your dressing gets wet, dirty or loose 24 to 48 hours after your procedure, call your healthcare team. If this happens after hours, call Health Link at 811.

While the dressing is on:

- You may shower but do not put the dressing directly in the water.
- You can protect it from the water by putting plastic around your chest like Saran Wrap®.
- If you take a bath, make sure the water is low enough so the IVAD does not touch the water.
- Do not use hot tubs, or go swimming.

Once the area is healed and the dressing is off, you can swim, shower and bathe as you normally would.

Possible Problems to Watch for

Pain:

- You may feel a bit sore and bruised for a few days to a week. If you are not yet on chemotherapy, take a mild pain medication such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®).
- If you are already on chemotherapy, talk to your healthcare provider about what you can do to manage your pain.
- Avoid activity that requires a lot of effort and strength.
- Avoid putting pressure on the site. Do not sleep on the IVAD or wear tight clothing over it.

Infection:

Watch your cuts for signs of infection:

- redness
- swelling
- discharge that is green in colour
- warmth
- increased pain
- fever or chills

Call the contact number your nurse gave you if you have an infection.

Blood clots:

- It is possible for a clot to form in or around the catheter. If this happens, you will get medication to help break down the clot.
- Watch for facial swelling, sudden chest pain or shortness of breath. If you have any of these symptoms, call the contact number your nurse gave you or go to the emergency room.

Call the cancer centre or go to the emergency room if:



- You have a fever or chills with a temperature of 38.3°C (100.9°F) or higher at any time or 38.0°C (100.4°F) to 38.2 (100.8°F) for at least 1 hour.
- The area around the IVAD becomes red, swollen, painful or has a coloured or bad-smelling discharge.
- You have sudden chest pain or shortness of breath.
- You have swelling in your neck or face, or arm on the same side as the IVAD.

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The information is to be updated every 3 years, or as new clinical evidence emerges. If there are any concerns or updates with this information, please email cancerpatienteducation@ahs.ca.

You can find this booklet and other resources at
www.cancercarealberta.ca

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