



It's time to break free
from your fear

Learn ways to manage and conquer
your fear of needles.



You're not alone—fear of needles is common

Whether it's giving blood or receiving a vaccination, most of us wince a bit when we see a needle coming toward us. However, it becomes an issue when the fear of needles causes people to avoid important treatment.

People experience needle fear for a variety of reasons

It can be difficult to pinpoint the root cause, but the most common reasons are thought to be experiencing an upsetting or painful interaction with needles at a young age, hearing stories about needles, or witnessing needle fear expressed by an adult close to the child.

Managing and overcoming needle fear

Over time and through practicing skills of relaxation and confidence, your fear of needles can decrease.

To feel more relaxed during your infusion, you may want to:



drink plenty of decaffeinated fluids



keep warm with a blanket or your favorite sweater



choose a room that is quiet with muted light



listen to soothing music or watch a movie



practice breathing techniques



One of the most important things you can do is tell your nurse or doctor about your fear of needles, especially if regular infusions are part of your treatment.

Why an infusion medication?

Infusion medications go directly into your bloodstream instead of traveling through your stomach, like medications you take by mouth.



Your doctor and nurse want you to be as comfortable as possible during your infusion. To make inserting the IV less painful, your doctor or nurse may apply a topical medicine on the IV access site to numb your skin.



What to expect before your infusion

Before beginning your infusion, your nurse will perform an initial evaluation and take your vital signs.

In order to make finding your vein as easy as possible, your nurse or doctor may:



ask you to lie down and raise your feet above the level of your heart



lower your arm below the level of your heart



gently tap over your vein



use an armband or blood pressure cuff



ask you to make a fist to pump blood through your vein



put a warm cloth over your arm



Be sure to communicate any concerns with your nurse or doctor before and during your infusion.

What is a port?

A port is a small device that acts like an artificial vein, making it easier for doctors and nurses to administer infusion medications. Doctors may recommend port placements for patients who receive regular infusions. There are risks associated both with having a port and with the procedure used to implant it. You should discuss these risks with your doctor before deciding if a port is right for you.

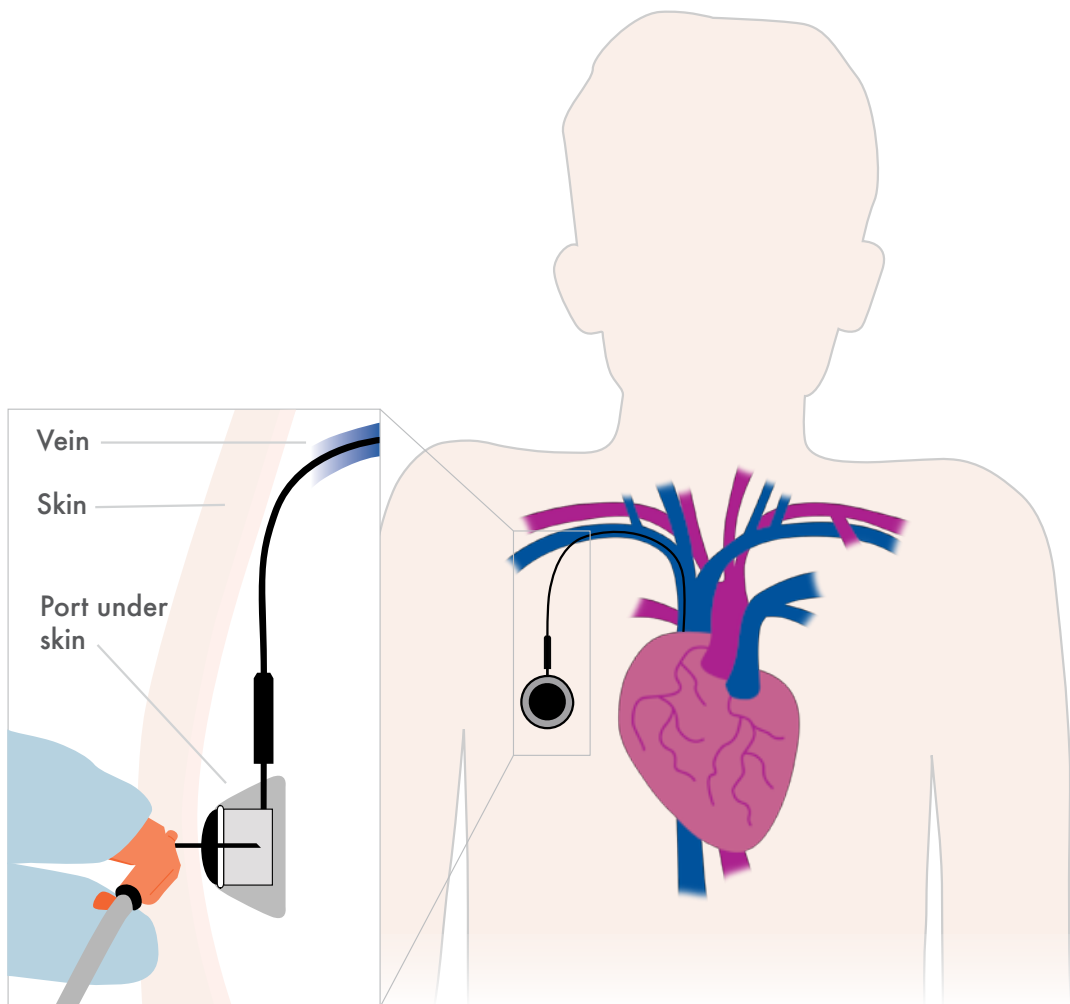
- Ports are implanted in a surgical procedure performed by an interventional radiologist
- They are placed just beneath the skin, usually on the upper chest below the collarbone
- You will have a thin scar (1-2 inches) and a small bulge under the skin where the port is located
- Ports can stay in place for several years

How does a port work?

Once implanted, a port-specific needle is placed into the port, allowing medication to be delivered into the bloodstream. Most patients feel a mild pricking sensation during needle insertion. An anesthetic cream may be used to numb your skin to reduce discomfort.

What should I ask my doctor if I am considering a port?

- Is a port an option for me?
- What are the risks and benefits of a port?
- How should I care for my port?



Talk to your doctor to see if a port is right for you. There are certain risks associated with ports, so it may not be the right option for your specific needs.

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