

Intraperitoneal Chemotherapy

Information for patients with ovarian cancer

In this document you will learn about:

- What is Intraperitoneal Chemotherapy
- How Intraperitoneal Chemotherapy is given
- Possible side effects & management techniques

What is Intraperitoneal Chemotherapy?

Intraperitoneal Chemotherapy (IP chemotherapy) is the delivery of anti-cancer drugs directly into the peritoneal space (inside the belly or abdominal area). This type of treatment allows direct contact of the cancer-fighting drug with the cancer. It allows a higher concentration of the drugs to be given to help kill the cancer cells in your peritoneal space.

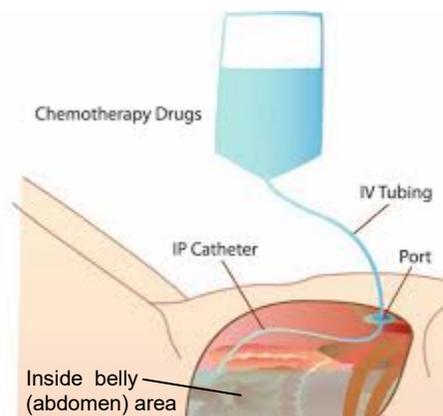


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www.whatnext.com/blog

How is Intraperitoneal Chemotherapy given?

Part I: Placement of your access port before your chemotherapy treatment

Your surgeon will place a peritoneal access port usually at the time of your surgery. This port is placed into a pocket beneath the skin near your rib cage. Your port may also be placed after surgery by a radiologist. It has a raised chamber attached to a catheter. The tip of the catheter is in your peritoneal space beneath your skin.



A sample access port.

Photo credit: <http://www.msa.com.au>

The nurse will place a special needle through your skin into the chamber. Fluids and chemotherapy will be delivered through the chamber and catheter into the peritoneal space. The port will remain in place for the course of your chemotherapy treatment. The port will be removed after your treatment is complete.

Part II: Day of chemotherapy treatment

What can you do to prepare for your treatment?

- Eat a light dinner the night before and a light breakfast the morning of treatment, unless other instructions were given by your oncologist.
- Wear loose fitting, comfortable clothing the day of your treatment.
- Arrange for someone to take you home from your chemotherapy appointment, as some of the medicine you receive may make you drowsy.
- Plan to be at the hospital for 3-6 hours on your treatment day.

On your day of treatment, please bring:

- Lunch, light snacks and water.
- Something to help you pass the time (e.g. reading material, electronic device with headphones).

You will be asked to empty your bladder prior to treatment.

You will be placed in a bed with your head slightly raised to a half-sitting position during the treatment period. You will not be able to sit straight since this may cause the port needle to come out.

The IV needle will be inserted into the peritoneal port. The infusion happens in 3 steps:

Step 1: warmed fluid will be given through your peritoneal port. This helps to distribute the chemotherapy in your abdomen.

Step 2: the chemotherapy will be given for a period of 30 minutes to 3 hours depending on your oncologist's orders. During this time you will not be able to go to the bathroom



Half-sitting position during treatment.

as we cannot stop the chemotherapy infusion process. If you must use the bathroom we can give you a bedpan.

Step 3: after the chemotherapy, we will give you another infusion of warmed fluid.

The nurse will flush your peritoneal port when the procedure is done and then remove the needle.

We will ask you to turn from side to side every 15 minutes to allow the chemotherapy to be spread throughout your belly. This may take up to 2 hours depending on your oncologist's orders.

What are the possible side effects? What can I do to reduce the discomfort?

Feeling of abdominal fullness that could last a few days after treatment

- Walking around after treatment may help
- Use a heating pad

Frequent urination (peeing) and feeling of bladder fullness

- Urinate (pee) before treatment. You will be able to use the bathroom after treatment is completed.

Breathing discomfort

- Raise the head of the bed during treatment
- Sit up or walk around after treatment

Nausea & vomiting

- We will give you anti-nausea medicine before your treatment
- If you feel nauseated after the treatment, call your gyn nurse navigator or the symptom support telephone service (see next page for phone numbers).
- Your doctor can prescribe anti-nausea medicine to take at home if needed

Lack of appetite

- Eat small, frequent meals (instead of large meals) for a couple of days after treatment.

If you are having the following symptoms:

- Severe or unusual abdominal pain
- Fever (temperature over 38.3°C (100.9°F) or above 38.0°C (100.4°F) for over an hour)
- Chills
- Pain, redness, or tenderness around the port
- Severe nausea or vomiting that lasts more than 24 hours or does not go away after taking anti-nausea medication
- You are unable to eat or drink
- Severe diarrhea for more than 24 hours that does not stop after taking anti-diarrheal medication
- Constipation for more than 3 days
- Leaking fluid from your vagina

Call your gyn nurse navigator at 705-728-9090 x43175, or the Cancer Centre Symptom Support Telephone Service:

Symptom Support Telephone Service



**During the day:
Cancer Centre Symptom Support
705-728-9090 x79565**



**Evenings, weekends and holidays:
Bayshore CAREchart 1-877-681-3057**

Please visit www.rvh.on.ca for the latest information and hours of operation.

When you get home: your turning schedule

Once the infusions are complete and the port is disconnected, you will change positions every 15 minutes for the first hour at the hospital. After you get home, for the next 2-4 hours you'll need to lie down on your bed and change positions from left, right, on your back, and on your abdomen every 15 minutes in order to move the chemotherapy around in your abdomen. Try to keep your hips raised (elevated) on pillows in order to expose your upper abdomen to the chemotherapy as often as possible.

How will Intraperitoneal Chemotherapy affect my life?

Aside from the possible side effects from your chemotherapy, the intraperitoneal port will not change your life very much. You may have to adjust your work schedule around doctor's visits and for your treatment. Exercise, such as walking, is helpful for your recovery. Talk to your doctor or nurse about any questions or concerns you have about exercise or sports.

Your sexual relationships do not need to change. If you have concerns about sexual activity, please talk to your doctor or nurse. The Sexual Health Intimacy and Cancer (SHIC) clinic in the Simcoe Muskoka Regional Cancer Centre is available to individuals or couples who want help with sexual health concerns. Please call 705-728-9090 x43520 to make an appointment for the SHIC clinic.



Additional Resources

Ovarian Cancer Canada 1-877-413-7970 www.ovariancanada.org
Canadian Cancer Society 1-888-939-3333 www.cancer.ca