

Intraperitoneal (IP) Chemotherapy for patients

This handout provides information about IP chemotherapy. Please ask us any questions and tell us your concerns about having this treatment.

What is IP Chemotherapy?

IP chemotherapy is putting cancer fighting drugs directly into the abdominal (belly) cavity. IP chemotherapy soaks any cancer cells located in this area in large amounts of highly concentrated cancer fighting drugs. Research has shown that this is an effective way to treat ovarian cancer.

How is IP Chemotherapy given?

A special device, called an implanted IP port, will be placed in your abdomen (belly), either at the time of surgery or at a separate time, as an outpatient in the X-ray (Radiology) Department.

The IP Port has 2 parts: an access port and a catheter.

Access Port. The access port is about the size of a looney and is placed just under the skin in either the upper or lower abdomen.

Catheter. The catheter is attached to the bottom of the port and is threaded through the layers of fat and muscle into the abdominal cavity.

Three steps to getting your chemotherapy

1. Your doctor decides the type of drug, amount of fluid, how often and the number of treatments that you need.
2. The nurse uses a needle to enter the IP Port to give the chemotherapy.
3. The chemotherapy is mixed in large amounts of fluid that is put into your abdomen through the IP port.

How do I prepare for my IP chemotherapy treatment?

Use this checklist to prepare:

- Wear loose fitting clothes.
- Eat a light breakfast the morning of treatment.
- Bring light snacks and drinks with you for your treatment.
- Bring a book or music to help fill your time. Your treatment will take about 7 to 8 hours.
- If you have earphones at home, bring them with you as there are televisions available for your use.

You are welcome to bring one friend or one family member with you for your treatment.

What should I expect during the treatment?

Once your chemotherapy is ready, you will be taken to a stretcher to lie down. You will be given some intravenous (IV) fluid. On the first day the chemotherapy drug is given through your IV. Once this first drug is done, the nurse will prepare you for your IP chemotherapy treatment.

Note: On Day 8, the nurse will prepare you for your IP chemotherapy treatment only.

You will be asked to empty your bladder and put on a patient gown before the nurse starts the IP chemotherapy. While the IP chemotherapy and fluid are going into your belly, you will not be allowed to get out of bed. You will need to lie flat with the head of the bed slightly raised the whole time.

Your nurse will need to put a needle into the IP port to give the chemotherapy. Before the needle is put into the IP port the area is numbed or frozen (local anesthetic). The medicine to numb the area looks like lotion and is spread over the IP port.

After the chemotherapy is in, the needle will be removed and a bandaid applied.

At this point, you will be moved every 15 minutes, from side to side. This is done for about 1 to 2 hours. The time varies, but usually does not take longer than 2 hours. This is done to make sure that the chemotherapy contacts every possible abdominal surface.

If you need to empty your bladder after the treatment has begun, you will be given a bedpan. The chemotherapy is left in your belly and your body will slowly absorb it over 2 to 3 days. During this time you may feel pressure in your belly and feel bloated or full.

You will also be given medication and fluid through an intravenous before, during, and after your IP treatment. This fluid is called hydration.

What care will I receive at home?

All patients receiving IP chemotherapy will receive home care. This means that a nurse will visit you at home after each of your IP chemotherapy treatments for at least 2 days. Home care is provided through the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integrated Network, HNHB LHIN (formerly CCAC).

You will have a special IV called a PICC. A PICC allows the chemotherapy nurses to take blood samples, give fluids and chemotherapy. It also allows the home nurse to give fluid and medications that you will need for about 2 to 5 days after your IP chemotherapy treatment.

How do I take care of myself at home?

After your treatment, you may be as active as usual. You may bathe or shower as normal.

You may eat normally, but may find it more comfortable to eat frequent, small meals.

- ✓ You should check the skin around your IP port daily, watching for any redness, tenderness or swelling.
- ✓ You must NOT swim while you have the PICC in place.

What are the possible side effects?

Below are some of the possible side effects that patients have told us about and what may help. You may not have all of the side effects.

Possible side effects	What may help
1. Abdominal bloating or pressure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Walk• Wear loose fitting, comfortable clothes• Sleep with 2 or more pillows
2. Nausea and/or vomiting or diarrhea	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell your home nurse• They may give you medication to help this feeling through your IV or you may take the pills your doctor has prescribed for this feeling• If this is not effective, call your oncologist
3. Hard time breathing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use several pillows when you lie in bed• Sit in an upright chair• Wear loose fitting clothing• Limit physically exerting tasks such as climbing stairs, etc.
4. Do not feel like eating	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eat small and frequent meals• Drink lots of fluids• Drink high energy drinks such as Ensure, Resource

When should I call my oncologist?

- Fever of 38.3°C (101°F) or higher.
- Pain, swelling or redness at the implanted port site.
- Bleeding or any leakage from the implanted port site.
- Hard time breathing that does not get better or gets worse with sitting upright or lying with extra pillows.
- Abdominal pain that does not improve as the fluid is absorbed.
- Severe nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or constipation lasting longer than 24 hours.
- If you are unable to eat or drink for longer than 24 hours.
- Have any unusual problems/concerns.

Oncologist: _____ - 905-387-9495