



Having Your PORT Removed in the Cancer Centre

You were given this handout to plan for the removal of your PORT. Your PORT is not removed until your systemic therapy treatment is finished. Your oncologist sends a referral to a surgeon. A surgeon removes your PORT. A clerk or nurse from the cancer centre calls you with your PORT removal appointment.

Before the appointment to have your PORT removed

- Eat your normal meals and drink fluids. You do not need to fast before this appointment.
- Take your regular medications as they are prescribed for you.
- If you take a blood thinner medication

The surgeon's office calls you with information on when to stop your blood thinner medication before your PORT removal (if this applies to you).

Having your PORT removed

- Come to the Durham Regional Cancer Centre for this appointment. Check in at a computer after you arrive at the cancer centre. Take a seat in the waiting room.
- A nurse will call you from the waiting room and help you prepare for your PORT removal.
- The surgeon uses a small needle to inject local freezing into your skin around your PORT site. This freezes or numbs the area.
- A small incision (cut) is made along the scar line you have from when your PORT was put in.
- The surgeon removes your PORT through this incision. You may feel some discomfort as the PORT is pulled out.
- Your incision is closed with dissolvable stitches. It is covered with steri-strips (small band-aids) and a dry dressing.
- You are in the cancer centre for about 30 minutes to have your PORT removed.

After your PORT is removed

- You may have mild pain or discomfort at your incision site for 1 to 2 days. You may take acetaminophen or ibuprofen to manage this pain or discomfort (unless the surgeon tells you not to). Follow the directions on the bottle or box.
- Keep your incision and dressing dry for 48 hours after your PORT is removed. Take the dressing off after 48 hours.
- Do not shower or have a bath until 48 hours after your PORT is removed.
- Do not remove the Steri-strips™ as they should fall off on their own. The stitches are dissolvable and will not need to be removed.

- Put an icepack on your incision site to help reduce any swelling. Put the ice pack on for 20 minutes then take it off for 20 minutes. Do this for the first 24 hours while you are awake. You do not need to use the icepack when you are sleeping.
- Return to your normal activities the day after your PORT is removed.
- If your surgeon told you to stop taking your blood thinner medication, ask your surgeon when you should restart it.
- You can have another PORT inserted in the future if needed.

Go to a walk-in clinic or the Emergency Department at the hospital closest to you if you have any of these symptoms:

- Severe pain around your incision site that does not go away. It is normal to have some pain and tenderness for a couple of days after the removal of your PORT.
- A fever above 38.3° C/100.9°F at any time or above 38.0° C/100.4°F for more than an hour.
- Increasing redness of the skin around your incision site.
- Any drainage from your incision site. This drainage may be yellow, brown or green.
- New bleeding from your incision site that does not stop.
- Swelling in your arm or shoulder

If you have a problem or concern about a symptom or side effect from your cancer treatment:

1. Call your primary nurse at the cancer centre from Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4 pm, (except on holidays). Use the phone number your primary nurse gave you.
2. Contact CareChart Digital Health from Monday to Friday, 4 pm to 8:30 am and anytime on weekends and holidays for symptom management support.

Talk to a nurse using one of these options:

- Call the after-hours telephone line at 1-877-681-3057.
- Request a video call by going to carechart.ca.
- Use the CareChart Digital Health App. This App is available to download for iOS or Android devices.

Call 911 or go to the Emergency Department at the hospital closest to you for a medical emergency. Talk to any member of your healthcare team if you have questions or do not understand any of the information in this handout.

Last reviewed: May 2025