

Home Management and Other Resources

Your CVAD is designed to give you as much physical freedom as possible.

Bathing (PICC and Tunneled Catheter)

Consider taking a shower instead of a bath. The entry site of the CVAD should not be immersed in water. During showering, the entry site should be covered with a plastic covering (such as AquaGuard®, plastic wrap, or shower sleeves) to prevent water from entering the site. Continue to use an antibacterial body wash.



Activity and Exercise

Most patients report they can return to normal activities within several days. Talk to your doctor before you start a vigorous exercise program.

- ▶ **For a PICC line:** Measure the line to be sure the arm movement and activity do not cause it to slip out. There are often lifting restrictions of no more than 10 pounds or a gallon of milk. This is to prevent the muscle contracting around the CVAD.
- ▶ **For a tunneled catheter and implanted port:** There are no published complications related to moderate exercise, but contact sports should be avoided. Patients state that they feel pain for the first few days to weeks near the port placement and occasionally in their back.
- ▶ **Swimming (PICC and Tunneled):** There is not sufficient evidence to make a recommendation related to swimming. The small number of studies report an increase in infection rate overall during the summer. There is consensus in all guidelines that the site and all needleless connectors should be cleaned immediately after swimming and water quality should be checked.

Returning to Work

You can return to work as soon as you are able. Some patients report returning the next day, while others need time off due to their illness and treatment (chemotherapy). If you have a job that requires repetitive arm use, heavy lifting, or is particularly dirty, you should work with your doctor and employer to make some adjustments.

Traveling

- ▶ Check with your doctor to make sure you are able to travel.
- ▶ Travel with emergency supplies—emergency clamp, dressing change kit, and needleless connector.
- ▶ For driving, there are usually no restrictions once you are off narcotics for pain control. If you feel discomfort from the seat belt, seat belt pads, or port, donut covers may be helpful.
- ▶ Keep a CVAD information card with you listing your CVAD type, product, insertion date, and doctor contact (see ACS kit and patient education website: surgicalpatienteducation.org).
- ▶ If you are traveling with PN, medications, flushes, or any medical supplies, you should contact your doctor and supplier to make sure that everything can be shipped ahead of time.
- ▶ For air travel, inform the transportation security officer before screening. The Transportation Security Administration website (tsa.gov/traveler-information/internal-medical-devices) provides guidelines for air travel and includes implanted ports, medications, and pumps.



Dressing

For a PICC and tunneled catheter, covers are available to keep the tubing from getting in the way of your clothes and activities. Cut-off socks and tube tops are also used. For an implanted port, bra strap pads to cushion over the port site may be helpful.



Antibiotics and Dental Procedures

The American Heart Association found no convincing evidence that the microorganisms associated with dental procedures cause an increase in infection with CVADs at any time after implantation. Check with your doctor before seeing your dentist.

