



INTRAPERITONEAL CHEMOTHERAPY

What is Intraperitoneal Chemotherapy?

Intraperitoneal Chemotherapy is the delivery of anti-cancer drugs directly into the peritoneal space (inside belly or abdominal area). This type of treatment allows direct contact of the cancer-fighting drug with the cancer and enables higher concentration of the drugs to be given. The drugs are left in the peritoneal space to “bathe” the cancer cells. There are different types of drugs that can be given and each may have different side effects. Your nurse will tell you about the side effects of the chemotherapy you will be receiving.

How is the Intraperitoneal chemotherapy given?

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. It has a raised chamber attached to a catheter. The tip of the catheter is in your peritoneal space. The nurse will place a special needle through your skin into the chamber. You will feel a small pin prick as the nurse is doing this. Fluids and chemotherapy will be delivered through the chamber and catheter into the peritoneal space. The port will remain in place at least for the course of your 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 your

treatment, unless otherwise directed by your physician.

- Wear loose fitting, comfortable clothing
- Arrange for a relative or friend to take you home from your chemotherapy appointment, as some of the medicine you receive may make you drowsy.

How is the Treatment given?

- You will be asked to empty your bladder before the treatment OR the doctor may order a catheter to be placed in your bladder to keep your bladder empty.
- You will stay in bed or on a stretcher with your head slightly raised to a semi sitting position during the treatment period. You will not be able to sit straight since this may cause the port needle to come out.
- You will have an intravenous line (IV) started in your arm.
- The peritoneal port will be accessed.
- Medicine for nausea will be given through the intravenous line in your arm before the intraperitoneal chemotherapy.
- Warmed fluid will be given through your peritoneal port. This helps to distribute the chemotherapy in your abdomen
- Next the chemotherapy will be given for a period of 30 minutes to 3 hours depending on your physician’s orders.
- This will be followed by another infusion of warmed fluid.
- The nurse will flush your peritoneal port when the procedure is done and then remove the needle.

- Then, you will be asked to turn from side to side every 15 minutes to allow the anti-cancer medicine to be spread throughout your belly. This may take up to 2 hours depending on your physician's orders.
- If a catheter was placed into your bladder, the nurse will take it out before you go home.

What are the possible side effects and what can you do to reduce the discomfort?

Due to the large volume of fluid infused into the belly during treatment you may have the following symptoms:

- Feeling of belly fullness that could last for a few days after treatment.
 - Walking around after the treatment may help.
- Frequent urination and feeling of bladder fullness.
 - It is important to urinate before the treatment. You will be able to use the bathroom after treatment is completed.
- Breathing Discomfort.
 - Elevate the head of the bed during treatment
 - Sit up or walk around after the treatment
- Nausea and vomiting.
 - Nausea medicine is given to you before the treatment
 - If you feel nausea after the treatment, tell your nurse.
 - Your doctor can prescribe anti-nausea medicine for you to take at home if needed.
- Decreased appetite.

- Eat smaller meals more often for a couple of days after treatment.

When should I call the Doctor?

- Severe or unusual abdominal pain
- Temperature over 100.5 degrees F
- 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.
- 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.

How will Intraperitoneal Chemotherapy affect my life?

Your life should not change very much. You may have to adjust your work schedule around doctors visits and for your treatment.

- Exercise, such as walking is encouraged. Talk to your doctor or nurse about any questions or concerns you have regarding 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.

Additional Resources

- National Cancer Institute (800-4-CANCER) www.cancer.gov
- American Cancer Society (800-ACS-2345) www.cancer.org