

Flushing Your Implanted Access Port

Each time your port is accessed it will be flushed. Flushing your implanted port is an important part of regular port care. It cleans it on the inside to prevent infection and clotting. Normally your port will be flushed before and after getting medications or fluids, and after getting your blood drawn. If you don't use your implanted port regularly, talk to your healthcare provider about how often your port needs to be flushed. It must be flushed at least once a month.

Usually, normal saline will be used to flush your port, but your healthcare provider may also prescribe a flush with Heparin. Heparin is a medication that prevents your blood from clotting and can help keep the tube open. To flush the port, your healthcare provider will clean the injection cap with antiseptic, and attach a syringe of normal saline. She will open the clamp and push the saline through the tube. All of the saline in the syringe will be used to thoroughly clean the inside of the line and prevent infection.

Once the port is flushed, the clamp is closed and the saline syringe is removed. The injection cap is cleaned with antiseptic again and left to air dry. If you need medication at this time, it is connected to the injection cap and delivered through the line. If you notice any leakage while getting your medications, tell your healthcare provider right away.

Once all of your medication is given, it will be disconnected from the injection cap and the cap wiped with antiseptic. Now the port must be flushed again with normal saline to keep the line clean.

If Heparin is used to clean your port, your port will always be flushed with normal saline before using Heparin and the Heparin will be drawn out of your port the next time it is accessed.

Remember, flush with normal saline solution. Get medication or fluid. Flush with normal saline solution again. Flush with Heparin if prescribed.