Your Guide To Intraperitoneal Therapy

Introduction

This booklet is designed to give you information about intraperitoneal (IP) therapy. It will prepare you to take part in activities that will help you during treatment.

What IP Therapy Is

IP therapy is when anti-cancer drugs are put into the peritoneal space (abdominal cavity). This space lies between the muscles in the abdomen and organs. The anti-cancer drug is mixed with fluid and injected into this space. This is done through a port and catheter. Your surgeon will insert an access port into a pocket beneath the skin near your rib cage. (See Figure 1)

The port has a raised chamber. On top of the chamber is a self-sealing rubber septum (disc). The chamber also has a side arm for attaching the catheter. The catheter is placed in your peritoneal space. (See Figure 2.) Your surgeon usually inserts the port and catheter at the time of your surgery.

IP therapy gives the cancer-fighting drug direct contact with the cancer in your peritoneal space. The drug is left in the space to “bathe” the cancer. This method allows a higher concentration of the drug to be given.

Where Your IP Therapy Will Be Administered

IP therapy may be given as an inpatient or outpatient. Your condition and the type of drug you are given will determine:

- Where you receive your IP therapy.
- How many treatments you will have.
- The duration of therapy.

During the treatment, you will be asked to stay in your bed/chair unless you need to go to the bathroom.

Who Will Administer Your IP Therapy

Your IP therapy will be given by a nurse. He or she will review this booklet and the Chemotherapy fact cards with you. The fact cards have important information about the drugs you will get.
How Your IP Therapy Will Be Administered

Before and during the IP treatment, fluid may be given to you through a vein. This is done to maintain your fluid level and give you medicine during treatment.

The nurse will put a needle through your skin and into the self-sealing disc in the port chamber. This will feel like a small pin prick. The needle will be taped in place and covered with a small dressing. The fluid and anti-cancer drug mixture will be in a bag that is attached to the needle. The amount of the mixture is determined by the treatment you are getting. It will be enough to allow the drug to reach and “bathe” all parts of the peritoneal space. The solution will flow into your peritoneal space by gravity. The treatment time varies, but it is usually no more than 1 1/2 to 2 hours. More solution may be ordered after the treatment. This would be done to improve the bathing of the peritoneal space.

After the solution has flowed into the space, the needle will be removed. A bandage will then be placed on the site. This bandage can be removed after about 30 minutes. Your nurse will ask you to move from side to side in bed a few times. This will help move the solution throughout your peritoneal space. Your IP therapy will then be complete and you may be out of bed as desired.

The solution will be absorbed by your body over the next few days. During this time, you may have abdominal bloating and pressure.

What To Do At Home To Prepare For Your Treatment

• Wear stretchy or loose-fitting clothes to the hospital.

• Eat a light dinner the night before and a light breakfast the morning of the treatment.

• If you wish, bring a CD player or iPOD so you can listen to music during treatment. There will also be a TV in the room where you receive your treatment.

• You should have a relative or friend go home with you the first few times until you know how you will react. Some medicines may make you drowsy.

Possible Side Effects Of Intraperitoneal Therapy And Comfort Measures To Reduce These Effects

You may not have any side effects from the IP therapy. However, some patients have reported side effects. The table below lists these and the comfort measures that patients found helpful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible Side Effects</th>
<th>Comfort Measures</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abdominal pressure and bloating</td>
<td>• Walk around after the treatment is finished.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is caused by the large volume of fluid injected into</td>
<td>• Wear comfortable clothes with an elastic waist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the peritoneal space.</td>
<td>Do this for the first few days after treatment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frequent urination/bladder fullness</td>
<td>• Empty your bladder just before starting treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is a desired side effect caused by the IV fluids.</td>
<td>You will be allowed to use the bathroom during the treatment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Breathing faster and more frequently</td>
<td>• Elevate the head of your bed during treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is caused by the large volume of fluid injected</td>
<td>• Walk around after the treatment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>into the peritoneal space.</td>
<td>• Sit in an upright chair after the treatment.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Some of the drug you receive is absorbed and carried throughout your body. The effects you feel may be caused by the drug(s) given to you.

**What You Need To Know About Home Care Of The Peritoneal Port**

- Since the access port is under your skin, no covering or bandage is needed.
- You may bathe or shower.
- Having a port and catheter should not limit your activities. Ask your doctor or nurse about going back to your normal activities. Reasonable exercise is allowed:
  - After the incision is healed.
  - Once you have recovered from the surgery.
- Inspect the skin around your port daily. Call your doctor or nurse if the area is red or swollen.
- The port and catheter do not affect your diet. You can continue to have your normal diet.

**When You Should Notify Your Doctor**

Call your doctor if:

- You have unusual abdominal pain.
- You have a fever of 100.4° F (38° C) or higher.
- The area around the port site becomes:
  - Red.
  - Swollen.
  - Tender.
- You have severe nausea or vomiting that lasts more than 24 hours.
- You have severe diarrhea that lasts more than 24 hours.
- You have constipation that lasts more than 24 hours.
- You are unable to eat or drink for more than 24 hours.
- You have any unexpected or unexplained problems.
Questions For Your Doctor Or Nurse

Below is some space for you to write any questions or comments about intraperitoneal therapy. We encourage you to talk to your doctor or nurse about any questions you have.