York and Scarborough
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Your INFUSOR
A guide for patients

Information for patients, relatives and carers

ⓘ For more information, please contact:

The Magnolia Centre
York Hospital
Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE
Monday to Friday 08.30 - 17.00: 01904 726516
Out of hours (ward 31): 01904 726031

The Macmillan Unit
Scarborough Hospital
Woodlands Drive, Scarborough, YO12 6QL
Monday to Friday 08.30 - 17.00: 01723 342447

Out of hours (ward 31): 01904 726031

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Introduction

As discussed with your oncology consultant you will be starting on a treatment for your cancer.

As part of the suggested treatment, you may have some types of chemotherapy over several days. You might be able to have some drugs through a small portable pump that you take home (known as an infusor) which will be attached to take home. The benefit of this type of treatment, means you do not have to stay in hospital for your treatment.

This leaflet will provide more information on the Infusor.

How does fluorouracil (5-FU) work to treat my cancer?

Fluorouracil is a type of chemotherapy called an antimetabolite. It blocks cancer cells' ability to make copies of DNA. Without a copy of DNA, a cell cannot divide. 5-FU kills the cancer cells as they get ready to divide.

How does the Infusor work?

An Infusor is a small pump that delivers medication. It is made of plastic.

The plastic case has a balloon that runs with the chemotherapy medication.

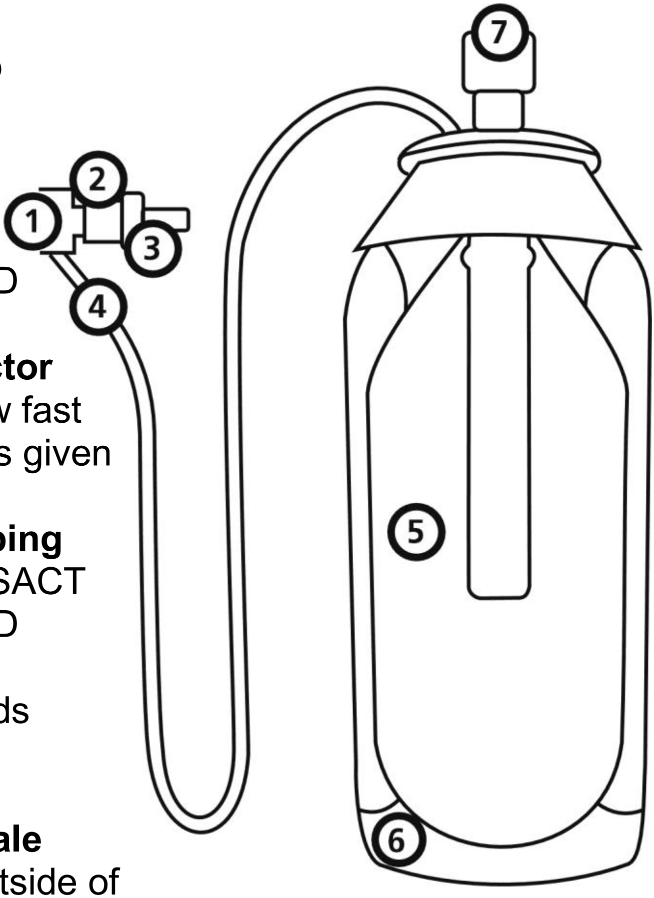
The flow restrictor controls how fast your chemotherapy runs. It must be taped against your skin at all times.

The nurse will connect the infusor to you.

The infusor will run over 24-46 hours; or up to seven days, dependent on your treatment.

A nurse; will remove the infusor when your chemotherapy is finished.

What does the Infusor^{TM} look like?



① **Winged cap**

② **Connector**
attaches
the infusor
to your CVAD

③ **Flow restrictor**
Controls how fast
your SACT is given

④ **Delivery tubing**
Carries the SACT
to your CVAD

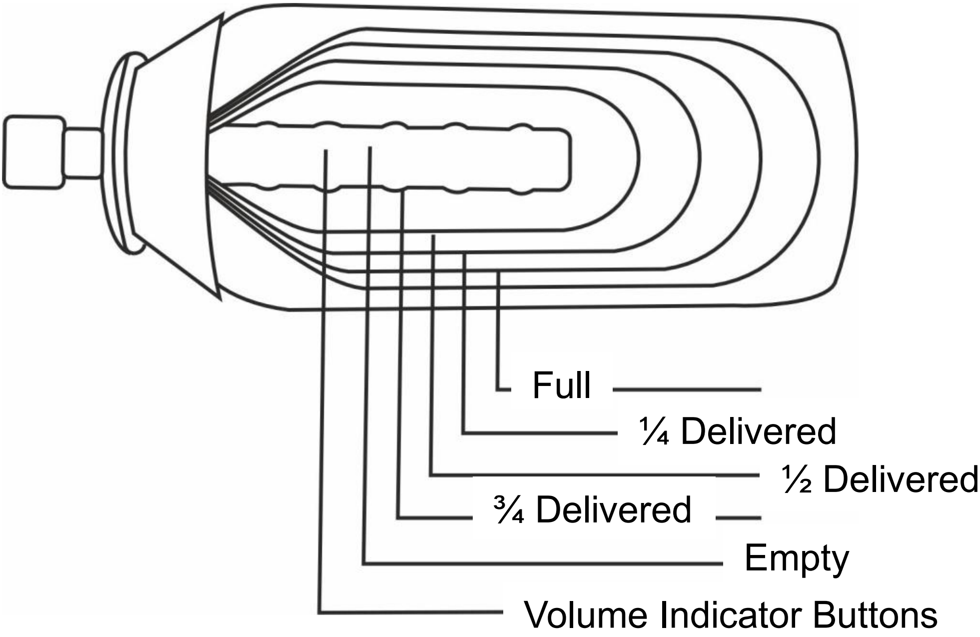
⑤ **Balloon** holds
the SACT

⑥ **Infusion scale**
marks on outside of
device showing how much
SACT has been given

⑦ **End Cap seals and protects the infusor system**

How to Check your Infusor:

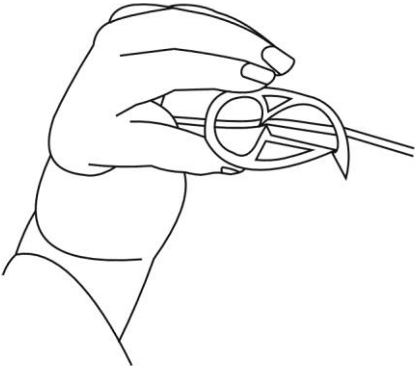
The balloon gets smaller over time as the medication is pushed. Your nurse will show you how to check (at least every eight hours) to see if the infusor is working correctly.



Intermate Infusion System

a) The clamp is open, and the tube is not bent or kinked to ensure that the medication is going through.
b) The flow restrictor is securely taped to your skin.
c) The dressing is securely taped to you.

*There should be no redness, swelling or wetness. There should be no blood in the line.



If the Infusor Leaks or Bursts:

- Immediately close the clamp.
- Put the infusor inside a ziplock bag to catch any leaking fluid.
- If the chemotherapy has touched your skin, wash the area well with warm, soapy water.

Common side effects

These side effects happen in more than one in 10 people (more than 10%). You could have one or more of them. They include:

Increased risk of getting an infection

is due to a drop in white blood cells. Symptoms include a change in temperature, aching muscles, headaches, feeling cold and shivery and generally unwell.
You might have other symptoms depending on where the infection is.

Infections can sometimes be life threatening. You should contact your advice line urgently if you think you have an infection.

> If your temperature is above 37.5°C, or you are unwell you must ring for advice on 01904 726516
> 08:30 – 17:00 Monday- Friday
> or ward 31 on 01904 726031 at all other times.

Bruising or bleeding

This treatment can reduce the production of platelets which help the blood to clot. Tell your doctor if you have unexplained bruising or bleeding, such as nosebleeds, bloodspots or rashes on the skin and bleeding gums.

Anaemia (low number of red blood cells)

While having this treatment you may become anaemic. This may make you feel tired and breathless. Let your doctor or nurse know if these symptoms are a problem. You may need a blood transfusion.

Diarrhoea

Contact your advice line if you have diarrhoea.
For example, in one day you have two or more loose bowel movements than usual. If you have a stoma, you might have more output than normal. Your doctor may give you anti diarrhoea medicine to take home.

Try to eat small meals and snacks regularly. It is best to try to have a healthy balanced diet if you can. You do not necessarily need to stop eating foods that contain fibre, however if your diet is normally very high in fibre, it might help to cut back on high fibre foods such as beans, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, bran, and raw vegetables.

Drink plenty of liquids to try and replace the fluid lost. Aim for eight to 10 glasses per day.

Feeling or being sick

is usually well controlled with anti-sickness medicines. It might help to avoid fatty or fried foods. Eat small meals and snacks and take regular sips of water. Relaxation techniques might also help.

It is important to take anti sickness medicines as prescribed even if you don’t feel sick. It is easier to prevent sickness rather than treat it once it has started.

Difficulty breathing

You might have a sudden feeling of tightness in your chest, difficulty catching your breath, wheezing and a cough. This is caused by spasms in the muscles of your airways. Contact the advice line (as given on your alert card) or tell your doctor.

Heart problems

You may get changes to your heart rhythm. Your doctor might ask you to have tests to check your heart, such as a heart trace (ECG).

Rarely your heart might stop beating (heart attack). Contact 999 straight away if you have chest pain.

Sore inflamed mouth and throat

It may be painful to swallow drinks or food. Painkillers and mouth washes can help to reduce the soreness and keep your mouth healthy.

Loss of appetite

You might lose your appetite for various reasons while having cancer treatment. Sickness, taste changes or tiredness can put you off food and drinks.

Hair loss

You could lose your hair. This includes your eyelashes, eyebrows, underarms, legs, and sometimes pubic hair. Your hair will usually grow back once treatment has finished but it is likely to be softer. It may grow back a different colour or be curlier than before.

Tiredness and feeling weak (fatigue)

You might feel very tired and lack energy.

Various things can help you to reduce tiredness and cope with it, for example exercise. Some research has shown that taking gentle exercise can give you more energy. It is important to balance exercise with resting.

Soreness, redness and peeling of palms and soles (hand foot syndrome)

The skin on your hands and feet may become sore, red, or may peel. You may also have tingling, numbness, pain, and dryness. This is called hand-foot syndrome or palmar plantar syndrome.

Moisturise your skin regularly. Your healthcare team will tell you what moisturiser to use.

Rare side effects

These side effects happen in fewer than one in 100 people (fewer than 1%). You could have one or more of them. They include:

- eye problems including rapid eye movement, inflammation, blocked tear ducts, blurred vision, eyelid turning outwards, watery eyes and double vision.
- headaches and dizziness
- shaking and trembling, stiffness, and slow movement (symptoms of Parkinson's disease)
- an increase in the muscle tone of your legs and feet causing them to be stiff.
- low blood pressure
- stomach ulcers or bleeding in your stomach.
- skin problems including rash, dry skin, increased sensitivity to sunlight, hives, darkening of the skin.
- nail problems including thickening, pain, changes in colour of the nail and nail bed.
- changes to the way your kidneys work - you have regular blood tests to check for this.

If you experience any of these side effects, please call the Triage Line (Alert Card).

Living with your Infusor

Please refer to page 2 for Living with your Infusor at:

http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/drug-database-site/Drug%20Index/Your%20Infusor%20-%20A%20Guide%20for%20Patients.pdf

References and further information

http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/drug-database-site/Drug%20Index/Your%20Infusor%20-%20A%20Guide%20for%20Patients.pdf

www.cancerresearchuk.org

If you would like more or accessible information, please contact the SACT nurses on 01904 726516.

Tell us what you think of this leaflet.

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact the Magnolia centre on telephone 01904 726516.

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net.

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website: www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/

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