

Indwelling pleural catheter (IPC)

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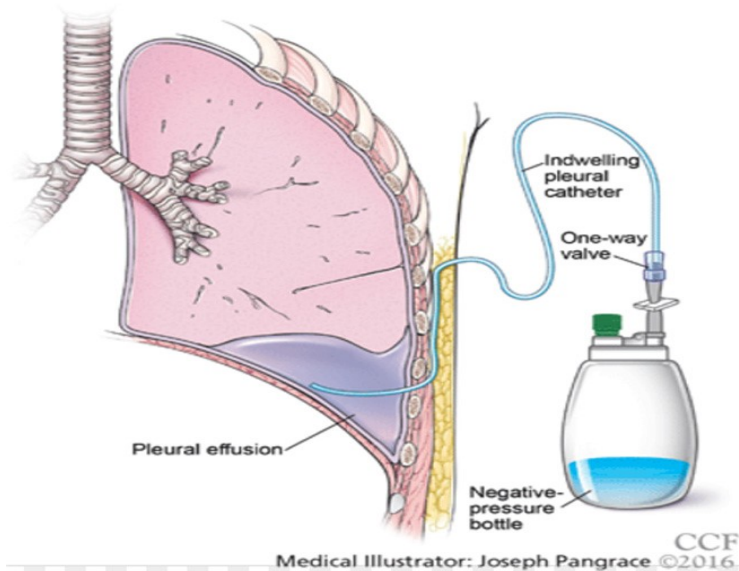


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What is an IPC (indwelling pleural catheter)?

Between your lung and chest wall there is an area called the pleural space, this consists of two thin membranes, one is the lining of the chest wall and one is the lining of the lung.

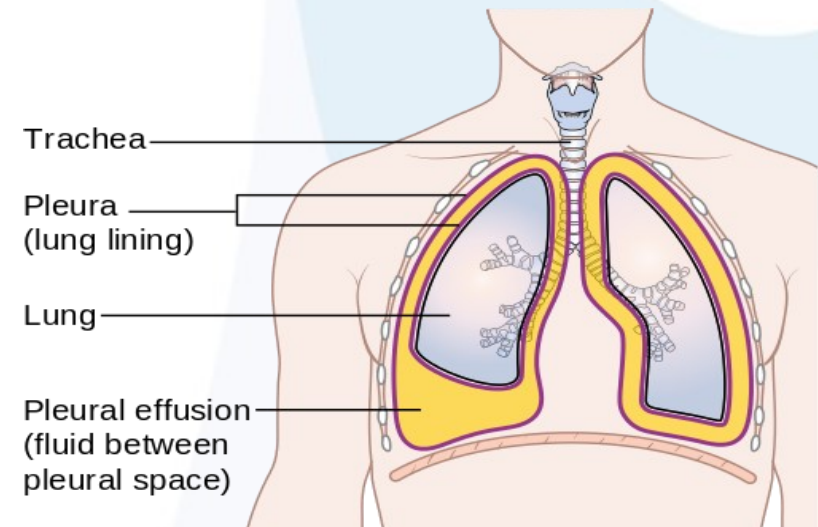
The IPC is a soft thin tube that is inserted through a small incision made in the skin and sits in the lining of the lung also known as the pleura. The opposite end of the tube stays on the outside of your chest, there is a one way valve on this side that prevents any fluid leaking out and air entering the tube into the chest.



Notes

There is usually a small amount of fluid in the pleural space, however in your case a large amount of fluid has accumulated, this can make you feel breathless as the lungs are not working as they should. Once the fluid is drained, it can relieve your breathlessness, but often the fluid can build up again after a period of time and even though this process can be repeated it can be uncomfortable and means more hospital visits.

The IPC stays in situ and allows the fluid to be drained on a regular basis, this can be done by the district nurses or if you or your family are willing to be trained, this can also be arranged.



What does the procedure entail?

- ◆ When you arrive the doctors will explain the procedure and ask you to sign a consent form
- ◆ You will then have an ultrasound scan of your chest so the doctors know where the best place to insert the IPC, this entails putting jelly on a probe and rolling it on the skin so the doctor can see the images on a screen
- ◆ The skin will then be cleaned with chloraprep this helps reduce bacteria that potentially can cause skin Infection
- ◆ A needle and syringe will then be used to inject local anaesthetic into the skin to numb the area, initially this may sting but will quickly resolve
- ◆ Two small incisions will then be made in the area, so the IPC can be easily passed through the skin into the pleural space
- ◆ There will be two stitches placed where the tube is inserted (they will be removed by the district nurses in 7-10 days) and a dressing will be placed over
- ◆ We will refer you to the district nurses who will come out 3 times a week to drain it if required, or if you and your family would prefer them to train you, this could also be arranged

What you need to do before your procedure?

If you take any of the following medications they must be stopped before the procedure as follows:

Medication	How long to stop for
Clopidogrel	7 Days
Warfarin	5 Days
Dabigatran, rivaroxaban, Apixaban, Edoxaban	3 Days
Enoxaparin	The day before the procedure

These medications can be restarted on the day after the procedure.

You will also need a covid swab prior to the procedure, which will be organised by the Lung Nurse Specialist team, who are based in Whiston Hospital.