

Ambulatory Pump

Information for patients



This information is for patients who have been prescribed an ambulatory pump. The ambulatory pump allows you to receive your 5-fluorouracil (5-FU) chemotherapy at home independently. This can help improve your quality of life whilst having your treatment.

This information is a general guide only. Your medical team will discuss your ambulatory pump in more detail during your oncology appointments. They will be happy to answer any questions you might have.

What is an ambulatory pump?

An ambulatory pump is a pressurised system that slowly delivers medicine into your body. It can safely give your chemotherapy intravenously, through a small tube in your vein. You will either have:

- A thin tube inserted into a vein in your arm that goes up to a vein in your chest (PICC line).
- A thin tube inserted under the skin on your chest that goes into a vein close by (Hickman line).
- A thin catheter connected to a port under your skin in the upper chest or arm (portacath).

Your pump then connects to this thin tube or catheter and delivers you chemotherapy directly into your blood.

What type of pump will I have?

The type of pump you will have is called a Baxter Infusor™ ambulatory pump.

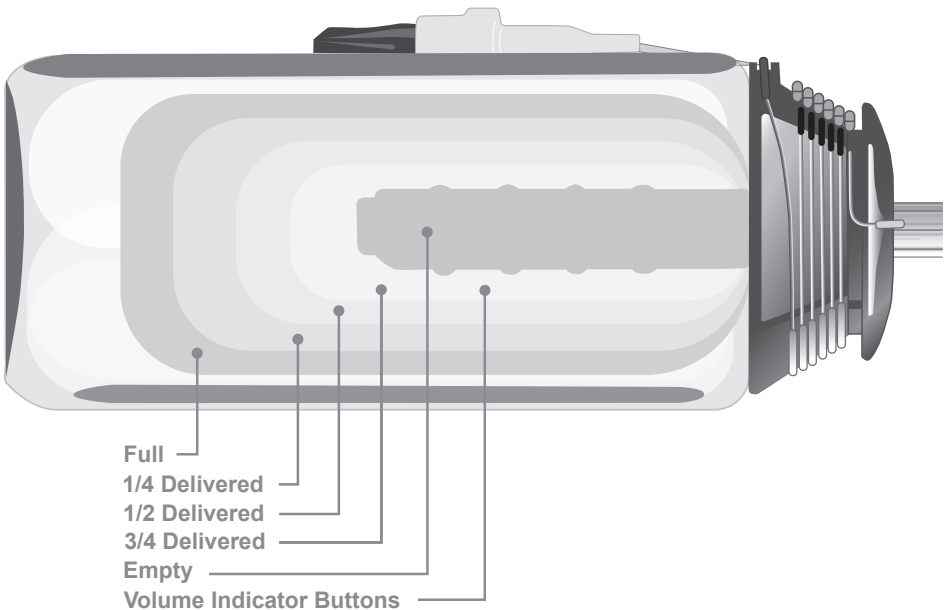
How does the pump work?

The pump has a soft balloon inside which contains your chemotherapy. The balloon is protected by a hard plastic case. This improves safety and reduces the risk of chemotherapy spillage. This balloon contracts and pumps the chemotherapy into the thin tube in your vein.

As the pump delivers your chemotherapy, you will see the balloon shrinking very slowly. The diagram below shows how the balloon shrinks as your treatment is delivered. You will know when your pump is empty as the balloon will be touching all eight empty indicator bumps.

Your team can adjust the speed and volume of chemotherapy the pump delivers. They will have chosen what is appropriate for you.

The pump is lightweight, disposable and silent. This allows you carry on with most of your daily activities at home without having to stay in the hospital.



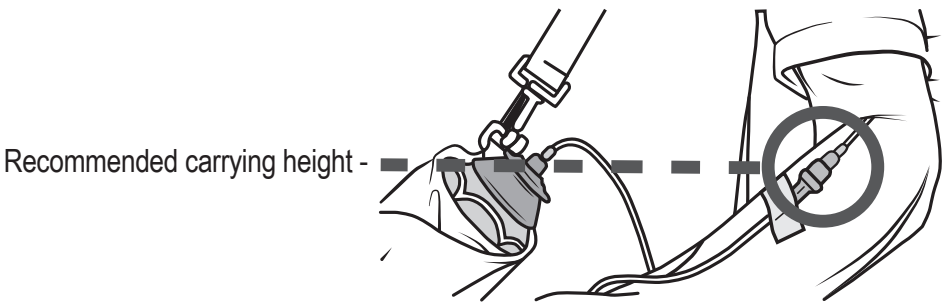
How long does it take to deliver my chemotherapy?

There are two different sizes of pump available. Depending on the size of your pump, your infusion may last from 1-7 days. Nursing staff will provide you with detailed information on how to care for your pump. They will also organise a community nurse to attend your home to disconnect the pump if required.

Frequently asked questions

How do I carry the ambulatory pump?

We will provide you with a Baxter carry case for your pump. It is recommended that you carry the pump at the same height as the connector on your IV line (see diagram below). This helps the chemotherapy to flow more accurately. We therefore recommend you carry your pump around your shoulder as shown below. This allows you to mobilise fully. We will secure the flow restrictor directly to your skin (circled in the diagram below). This helps to maintain temperature for more accurate flow.



How do I position the ambulatory pump when sleeping?

When sleeping at night we do not recommend placing your ambulatory pump on the floor or above your head. Remember, the pump works better if it is at a similar height to the connector on your IV line. Patients find it most comfortable when they tuck the pump under their pillow. The hard outer case minimises the risk of the pump being damaged.

Can I shower while the pump is attached?

You will be given a shower proof sleeve to protect the tubing from water. We will also give you a prescription for a tougher waterproof sleeve. Although the pump can get wet, we recommend that you avoid putting it under water. A suction hook is a great place to hang your pump in the shower and it can be left in the carry case.

Can I fly with my ambulatory pump?

It is safe to fly with your ambulatory pump. However, please ensure that it remains at the appropriate height and temperature as shown in the previous diagram.

Is there medicine left in the ambulatory pump once completed?

Yes. A volume of 1 ml in the small volume ambulatory pump and 3 ml in the large volume ambulatory pump remains in the balloon and the tubing. You will still have received your full dose of chemotherapy.

Do I need to wear specific clothing when the ambulatory pump is attached?

We recommend baggy clothing on the day of your treatment and during the infusion. This helps to prevent restriction of the tubing and can make you more comfortable. We recommend that the device is kept outside your clothing to avoid flow problems.

What do I do if the ambulatory pump leaks?

1. Immediately clamp your central line (PICC line, Hickman line or portacath).
2. Contact your community nurse immediately to disconnect your pump and dispose of it safely.
3. If your community nurse is unavailable or it is out of hours contact the Beatson Cancer Treatment Helpline or National Helpline for advice (numbers provided at the end of this leaflet).
4. If your medication comes directly in contact with your skin, immediately wash the area with warm soapy water.
5. If the medication leaks onto a surface use the spill kit as instructed.

What do I do if my ambulatory pump is not delivering my medication?

- Remember your ambulatory pump flows extremely slowly, so make sure you have waited long enough.
- Check that your central line clamp is in the open position (moves freely on the line).
- Ensure there are no kinks in the ambulatory pump tubing.
- Make sure the flow restrictor is taped directly to the skin (see previous diagram).
- If in doubt contact your community nurse in the first instance.
- If it is out of hours or your community nurse is unavailable, contact the Beatson Cancer Treatment Helpline or National Helpline.

What do I do if the ambulatory pump tubing becomes disconnected from my central line?

1. **DO NOT** reconnect.
2. Immediately contact your community nurse for assistance.
3. If it is out of hours or your community nurse is unavailable, contact the Beatson Cancer Treatment Helpline or National Helpline immediately.
4. Chemotherapy should not leak from the tubing but if it does please follow instructions in the spillage kit provided.

What do I do if I start feeling serious side effects when my pump is delivering my treatment?

- Sometimes cancer drugs can result in very serious side effects, which rarely can be life threatening. If concerned, contact your oncology team or if out of hours the Beatson Cancer Treatment Helpline or National Helpline.
- Rarely the drug inside the pump can affect your heart. **If you experience pain or tightness in your chest, feel breathless or notice changes to your heartbeat** - close the clamp on your line and immediately call NHS 24 ☎ 111.

Who do I contact if I require assistance with my ambulatory pump?

In the first instance contact your community nurse for assistance. If it is out of hours or your community nurse is unavailable contact the helpline below:

The Beatson Cancer Treatment Helpline

Beatson 8am-8pm - ☎ 0141 301 7990

National 8pm-8am - ☎ 0800 917 7711

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