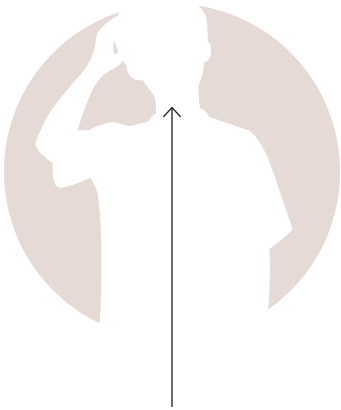


## The Pros and Cons of CVADs

### DEVICES CAN EASE INFUSIONS, BUT PROPER CARE IS ESSENTIAL

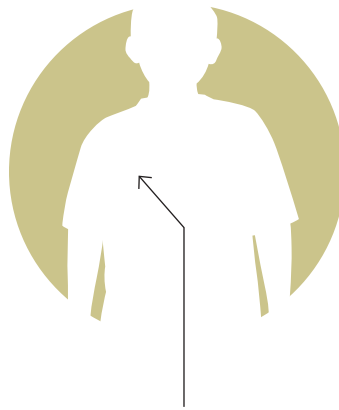
A central venous access device (CVAD), which allows access to large veins in the center of the body for infusion, is more commonly used in children, yet adults may find one helpful as well. While certain CVADs involve external catheters, or tubes, port-a-caths ("ports" for short) offer convenience and longer-term service, making them popular with patients and families. Here's a rundown of the most commonly used devices and their basic pluses and drawbacks.



#### Tunneled central venous catheter

To infuse, a person accesses the external end of the catheter, which is surgically implanted under the skin and inserted into a vein in the neck or chest.

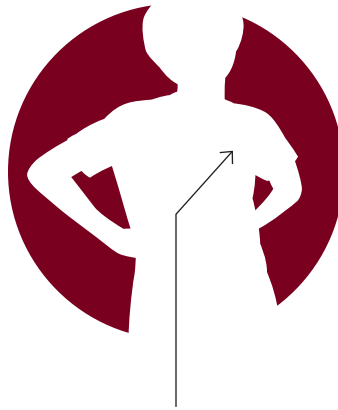
The device can be used for a year or more. Hickman and Broviac catheters are common versions.



#### Nontunneled (external) central venous catheter

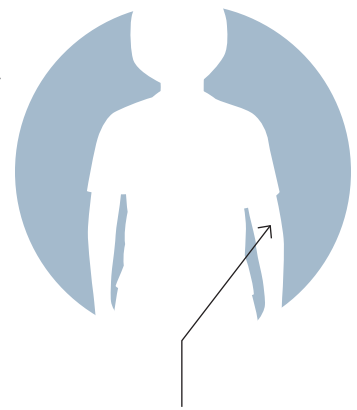
This type of catheter is inserted into a vein, often in the chest.

To infuse, a person injects into a cap on the end of the catheter tube. Dressings are put over the cap to help prevent infections.



#### Port (internal CVAD)

A port, typically a port-a-cath, is a small device surgically implanted under the skin, often in the upper chest.



#### Peripherally inserted central catheter (PICC)

A PICC is inserted into a vein in the arm. Infusions are done through the external end of the catheter. The devices are cost-effective and easy to implant, but they can be used only for several weeks or a few months.

#### PROS



Relatively easy to insert and remove; no needle poke



Easy to use



Easy to use; unrestricted activity; can be used for several years; lowered risk of infection



Can remain in the vein for longer periods

#### CONS



Daily maintenance to prevent infection; may restrict activities



Only for short-term use



Requires needle poke to access the port



Daily maintenance to prevent infection; may restrict activity; potential for blood clots

**5M+**

More than 5 million central venous catheters are inserted in the US each year to treat a variety of conditions. SOURCE: UpToDate

