Ommaya Reservoir

An Ommaya reservoir is a small plastic dome-like device with a small tube. The reservoir is placed under the scalp, and the small tube is put into a space in the brain called a ventricle. The ventricle contains fluid called cerebrospinal fluid (CSF). The CSF surrounds and cushions the brain and spinal cord.

How is the Ommaya reservoir put in?

- The Ommaya reservoir is placed during surgery.
- Your head will be shaved in the area where the reservoir will be placed.
- The incision will be closed with sutures or staples. These will be taken out after 10 to 14 days by the doctor or nurse.
- Keep your incision clean and dry.
- The reservoir is permanent unless there are complications.
How is the Ommaya reservoir used?
An Ommaya reservoir can be used to:

- Give medicines directly into the CSF of the brain and spinal cord
- Take samples of CSF for testing
- Measure the pressure in the brain

What steps are used to access an Ommaya reservoir?

- The doctor or nurse will gently feel the Ommaya reservoir and pump it 3 to 5 times by pushing down on it gently. This is done to pull the CSF into the reservoir.
- The hair over the Ommaya reservoir will be shaved.
- The area on your scalp is cleaned with alcohol, then with a Chlorohexidine (CHG) antibacterial solution.
- A small needle is put into the Ommaya reservoir.
- A small amount of CSF is removed. This sample of CSF may be sent to the lab for testing.
- If you are getting medicine through the Ommaya reservoir, the doctor or nurse will inject the medicine slowly over 5 to 10 minutes.
- After the needle is removed, the area may be covered with a Band-Aid®.
- The Ommaya reservoir will be pumped again 3 to 5 times to mix the medicine into the CSF.
- Pressure will be put onto the area for about one minute.
- The whole procedure takes about 15 to 20 minutes.
- Side effects of the procedure may include: headache, nausea, or vomiting, pressure or pain when the needle is put into the reservoir.

What happens after the reservoir is used?

- You may be asked to lie flat for a period of time after the reservoir is used.
- When it is okay for you to sit or stand, you may do all your normal activities. This includes washing your hair.
• The Ommaya reservoir does not need special care.

• You should not participate in activities that could cause injury or harm to the reservoir site.

When should I call the doctor?

Call the doctor or nurse if you have any of the following:

• Pain, tenderness, redness, swelling or drainage where the Ommaya reservoir is located
• Fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) or higher
• A stiff neck
• Headache with or without vomiting
• Blurred vision