

Your PICC Catheter for Home IV Therapy

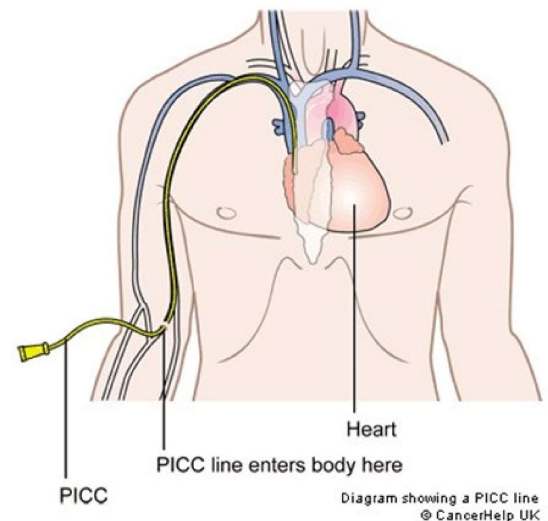
Introduction

Your prescriber has recommended **intravenous medications** as a part of your treatment.

To give you these intravenous medications (also called **infusions**), your prescriber has ordered the insertion of a device called a **peripherally inserted central catheter** or **PICC intravenous catheter**

A PICC catheter is a thin tube made of a very soft and flexible material. It can be different sizes but it is usually about 20 inches long.

The PICC catheter is placed into a vein above the bend of your arm (the same place where you may have blood drawn at your prescriber's office.) The tip of the PICC will be placed in a vein that ends about one (1) inch before your heart.



Important Points about Your Catheter

- PICCs may be kept in place for as long as needed to complete your infusion therapy. The following are recommendations to keep your PICC free from any complications.
- Your nurse will place a new sterile dressing over the site weekly. Keep the site clean and dry. If the dressing starts to come off or if the site gets wet, contact your home care nurse so they can replace the dressing.
- Always wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer prior to flushing your catheter or administering your medication. Remember to 'scrub the hub' of the needleless connector on the catheter with an alcohol wipe for at least 15 seconds prior to administering medication or flushes.
- It is okay to continue with most usual activities but avoid continuous repetitive motion or heavy lifting with the PICC arm.
- It is okay to shower, but your PICC site must be covered to protect it from getting wet. Do not swim or immerse your arm in bath water while the PICC is in place.
- Check your temperature daily as this is often the first sign that the PICC site needs further evaluation. Report to your prescriber if your temp is 100.4 F or above.

- Never use scissors or sharp objects around your PICC line or to remove the dressing as this can result in an accidental cut in the line.
- If your PICC line accidentally breaks, immediately apply a clamp above the cut (closer to the insertion site) and call your home care nurse.

Signs or Symptoms to Report to Your Nurse or Pharmacist

- Bleeding (more than dime-sized) or oozing from the PICC site
- Temperature of 100.4 or greater
- A loose, wet, or dirty PICC dressing
- A catheter that is becoming harder to flush or feels 'clogged'
- Pain, redness, or swelling in the PICC arm or around the PICC site
- Accidental tugging on the PICC that increases the amount of the catheter that is outside your body
- Ringing or whooshing in your ears when infusing your medication
- Heart palpitations, dizziness or lightheadedness
- Any other unusual or new symptoms

Notes and Instructions