

The Purpose of this Information Sheet

This information sheet has been written by patients, members of the public and health professionals. We hope it will be useful for you, your family/whanau, friends and carers in providing all the information you will need about the Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter (PICC) you are having inserted for treatment. It outlines:

- ◆ What is a PICC?
- ◆ Why do we use a PICC?
- ◆ Do I have alternative options to a PICC?
- ◆ Are there any risks if I have a PICC?
- ◆ How is my PICC inserted?
- ◆ Where is my PICC placed?
- ◆ What should I expect after insertion of my PICC?
- ◆ How do I care for my PICC?
- ◆ What happens when I go home?
- ◆ What are my responsibilities?
- ◆ Identifying and resolving problems with my PICC
- ◆ Important phone numbers
- ◆ PICC measurements



This is a photo of a double lumen PICC

What is a PICC?

A PICC is an **IntraVenous (IV)** flexible tube made of polyurethane. It can have one or more lumens (tubes).

The end of each lumen has a hub which is coloured. Double lumen PICCs may have a **BROWN** or **PURPLE** hub and a **WHITE** hub. Generally the **BROWN** or **PURPLE** lumen is used to take blood samples and for giving blood products. The **WHITE** lumen is used for medications and IV fluids.

The end of each lumen has a positive displacement device (luer plug) attached to it --this prevents any backflow of blood into the PICC tip causing it to block. The PICC has a clamp on each lumen to prevent air entering the catheter when your luer plugs are changed.

Your doctor and nurse will decide if you need a double or single lumen PICC.

Why do we use a PICC?

- ◆ It allows us to give you all your IV medications and to take most of your blood samples.
- ◆ It reduces the need to insert needles into your veins making treatments more comfortable for you. This is useful when your treatment can take weeks or months as it can stay in place for up to a year or more.
- ◆ It allows us to give you more than one drug at a time without the drugs mixing before they reach your blood stream.

Do I have an alternative option to a PICC?

There are other types of IV catheters which can be used. Please feel free to discuss the choice of catheter with your doctor or nurse.

Are there any risks if I have a PICC?

There are risks associated with any type of IV catheter we may need to use. The risks relating to the insertion of the PICC will be discussed with you on the day of insertion. The Radiology Department PICC team has specialist knowledge about these risks. Remember you always have a choice to change your mind.

The risk of having the PICC in your arm especially if it is in place for any length of time include a change in the position of the PICC, mechanical phlebitis (refer to *How do I care for my PICC*), infection or blood clot. Addressing these risks is covered later in this information sheet.

How is my PICC Inserted?

Before having the PICC inserted, you need to drink 1-2 litres of fluids. Alternatively, you may be given IV fluids through a small cannula (plastic tube) which is placed in an arm vein. The reason for this is to increase the fluid in your blood making it easier to place the PICC in your veins.

The PICC is inserted in the Radiology Department by one of the specialist PICC nurse inserters. This may be done as an outpatient or as an inpatient.

The Radiology Nurse will explain the procedure to you in the Radiology Department. You will be asked to sign a Request for Treatment by Operation /Procedure (Consent Form) for the procedure to be done.

You will be asked to lie down on an X-ray table and your arm will be cleaned with an antiseptic solution.

The nurse will wash her/his hands and dress in a sterile gown, gloves, cap and mask. She/he will cover your arm and surrounding area with sterile cloths. An ultrasound machine will be used to find a vein in your arm that is suitable for the PICC.

Local anaesthetic will be injected to numb the area before the PICC is inserted.

After the PICC is inserted the X-ray machine will be moved over your chest to take an X-ray. This is done to ensure the PICC tip is in the correct position in your chest.

This will be confirmed by a Radiologist.

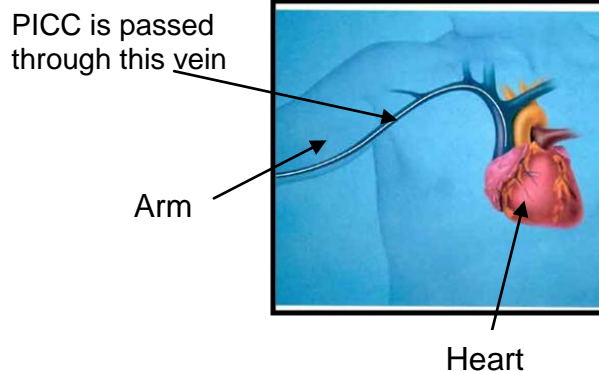
Your arm will then be cleaned and a dressing will be placed over the insertion site.

There will be a Radiologist available at all times.

This is the room in Radiology where your PICC is inserted:



Where the PICC is placed:



What should I expect after insertion of my PICC?

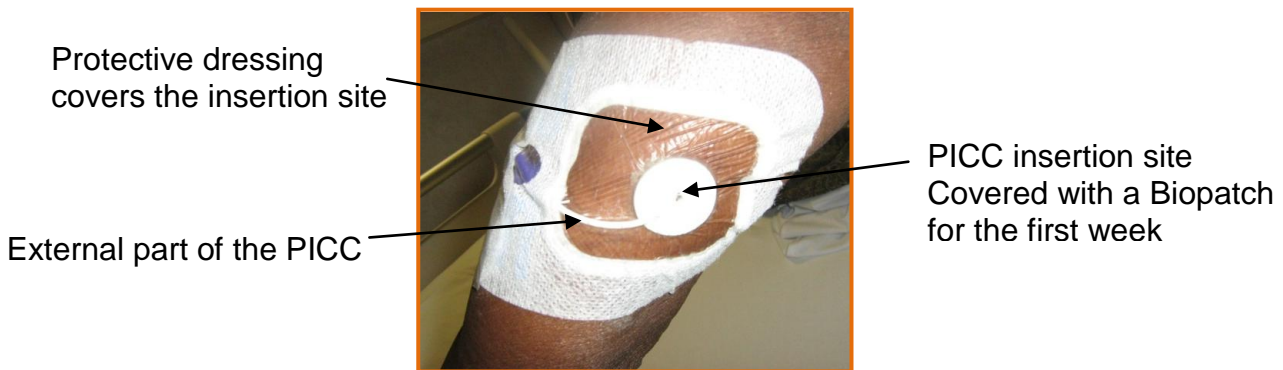
You may have some bruising around the insertion area and mild discomfort once the local anaesthetic has worn off.

Pain relief will help relieve any discomfort.

There may be oozing of blood at the insertion site. The nursing staff will monitor this on a regular basis.

It is important that you rest your arm and keep it warm for an hour following the procedure.

The PICC is dressed with a special dressing and securement system



Your PICC will be assessed 8 hourly for any bleeding or bruising at the insertion site. It will be redressed if necessary in the first 24 hours. The area above the insertion site will be checked for swelling, redness or pain.

Your PICC is redressed weekly or if the dressing becomes loose or damaged. When your PICC is redressed, the insertion site and surrounding area will be inspected by the nurse. The outer portion of the PICC will be measured to ensure it hasn't moved. Your upper arm is then covered with Netlast to protect the PICC from being knocked.

How do I care for my PICC?

Protecting your PICC from getting an infection is important

- ◆ Always wash your hands before touching your PICC.
- ◆ Ensure your PICC is always well secured and protected.
- ◆ Do not bath or swim while you have your PICC in place.
- ◆ Keep your PICC dressing and the luer plugs dry during showering. You can do this by wrapping your upper arm with Gladwrap or use a plastic bag taped at the top and bottom.
- ◆ Do not lift heavy items, including pets, using the arm that has the PICC in.
- ◆ Avoid pulling on your PICC or doing activities that could dislodge or damage your PICC. This may include sporting activities that require the use of your arms like golf, racquet sports, gardening and chopping wood.
- ◆ Never use scissors, pins or needles around your PICC.
- ◆ Always keep your appointments for your PICC dressing.
- ◆ Please let us know if you are unable to make appointments.



Important:

- ◆ Excessive use of the arm your PICC can cause the PICC to move up and down irritating the vein wall. If this happens, the area over the upper arm will become red and painful. This is called mechanical

phlebitis. If this occurs, contact your treatment centre immediately (refer to important phone numbers on the next page).

- ◆ If you experience any of the symptoms on Page 5, contact your treatment centre immediately.

What happens when I go home?

When you are discharged from hospital, your PICC will be redressed weekly, the luer plug changed and the PICC flushed. This may coincide with a visit to the hospital or be done by a district nurse. This is important and is done to help prevent infection and to keep your PICC working properly.

Keep the wallet sized card handy with the PICC measurements on it or write the measurements on the back page of this sheet. The nurse doing your dressing each week will need to know the measurements.

What are my responsibilities?

Each day, check your PICC site for any problems such as pain, redness, leaking or tightness and swelling of your upper arm. If you feel unwell or a problem arises and you are concerned, contact your treatment centre immediately.

Report anything you feel is not right with your PICC

Always wash your hands before touching your PICC



Remember – it's a team effort when caring for your PICC.

Identifying problems and resolving problems with my PICC

Problem	Cause	Contact
PICC Site		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Pain or oozing at your PICC site – Redness – Swelling 	Could be infection	Your treatment centre
Feeling unwell		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Temperature, cough – Increased heart rate – Chills and shaking 	Sign of infection	Your treatment centre
Swelling		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Of the upper arm – Pain in the neck and shoulder – Neck – Hand mottled 	Sign of clot in vein	Your treatment centre
Catheter		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Abnormal feeling at insertion site – Palpitations – Tingling and pain 	Catheter may have come out of position	Your treatment centre
Breathing problems		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Shortness of breath – Chest pain 	May have clot in lung Air may have entered the vein	GO IMMEDIATELY TO THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT OR YOUR COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

For advice or help, contact your treatment centre by calling one of the numbers below:

Your ward/department Nursing Staff must complete this section for you.

Ward/Department: _____ Contact phone number: _____

Additional Information: _____

Always keep this information sheet with you and bring it to any emergency appointment

PICC Measurements

Total Length:

Internal Length:

External Length:

Notes / Questions