

Having a PICC Line Inserted

Information for Patients

What is a PICC line?

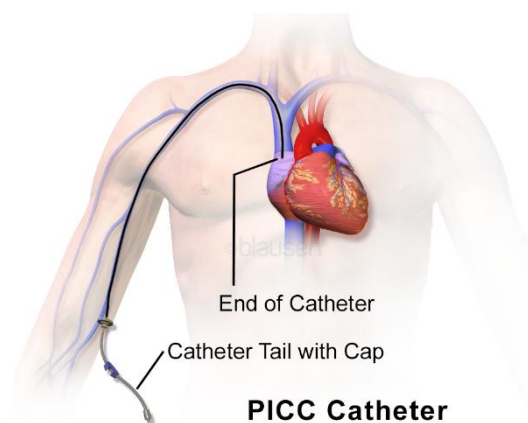
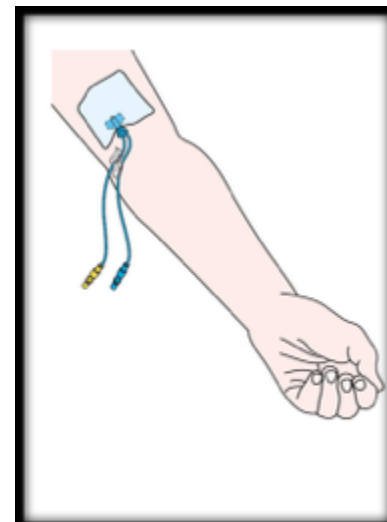
PICC stands for a Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter. The catheter is a long, flexible, thin tube which can be used to give you medicines.

Why are you getting a PICC line?

PICC lines are inserted if you are likely to need a prolonged course of intravenous medicine, including nutritional support, or if the medicine that you are receiving needs to be delivered directly into a large vein. PICC lines can also be used to take blood samples.

How is a PICC line inserted?

PICC lines are often inserted in the x-ray department. It is a sterile procedure which is done under local anaesthetic. Once the area is numb, the line will be inserted into one of the veins in your arm, usually above the elbow crease. It will then be advanced up the vein in your arm and into a central vein in your chest. The tip of the PICC line will sit inside a large vein near your heart and the other end will come out underneath the skin of your arm. You will have one or more x-rays during the procedure to check that the tip is in the correct position. After the procedure, you will return to the ward for a short period of monitoring.



Risks

Although PICC line insertion is generally very safe, all medical procedures carry risks. Specific risks for this procedure include:

- clots forming in the vein (thrombosis)
- inflammation (phlebitis)
- infection
- catheter migration
- damage to surrounding blood vessels or nerves
- irregular heartbeat.

Before the procedure this will be explained to you in more detail and you will have a chance to ask any questions you may have.

Caring for your PICC line

The PICC line is held in place by a dressing which is usually

changed every week. The cap at the end of the line is also changed each week to reduce the risk of infection. The PICC line should be flushed regularly to prevent it from becoming blocked. You will be shown how to do this yourself, if required. Your PICC line will normally stay in for the duration of your treatment.

What to do if you have any worries about your PICC line

PICC line insertion is a safe and sterile procedure; however there are a few things to look out for after. These include: redness or pain at the entry site or tracking up your arm; fluid or blood leaking from around the dressing; or the line becoming dislodged and/or loose. If you are concerned about your PICC line please contact either your local GP surgery or the department who inserted it.

Cancellation

While we make every effort to avoid this where possible, there is always a risk that your operation may be cancelled at short notice. This is due to either emergency patients who require urgent surgery or other reasons which are beyond our control. We realise that this can cause distress and inconvenience, but in the event that your surgery is postponed, you will be offered a new date as soon as possible.

Keeping your Appointment

If you cannot keep your appointment, or have been given one that is unsuitable, please change it by phoning the number on your appointment letter. Your call will give someone else the chance to be seen and will help us keep waiting times to a minimum.

Public Transport and Travel Information

Bus details available from:

Lothian Buses on **0131 555 6363** www.lothianbuses.co.uk

Traveline Scotland on **08712002233** or www.travelinescotland.com

Train details available from:

National Rail Enquiries on **03457 484 950** or www.nationalrail.co.uk

Patient Transport

Patient Transport will only be made available if you have a medical/clinical need. Telephone **0300 123 1236** *calls charged at local rate up to 28 days in advance to book, making sure you have your CHI Number available. Hard of hearing or speech impaired? Use text relay: **18001-0300 123 1236*** (calls charged at local rate). To cancel patient transport, telephone **0800 389 1333** (Freephone 24 hour answer service).

Interpretation and Translation

Your GP will inform us of any interpreting requirements you have before you come to hospital and we will provide an appropriate interpreter. If you are having this procedure as an existing in patient, staff will arrange interpreting support for you in advance of this procedure. This leaflet may be made available in a larger print, Braille or your community language.