Intermountain® Healthcare

PICC (Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter)

What is a PICC?

A PICC is a long flexible tube (catheter) that is inserted into a large vein in your arm and then threaded into a large vein above your heart.

Why do I need it?

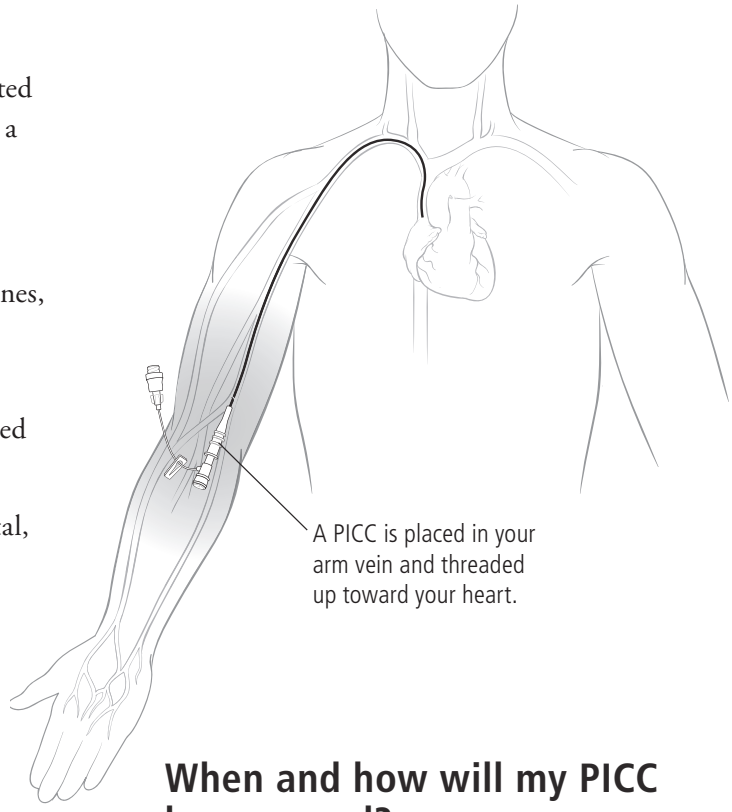
A PICC can be used to draw blood or to give medicines, fluids, nutrition, or blood products.

A PICC can be left in place much longer than an IV (intravenous) catheter. For this reason it is usually used with treatments that will last longer than a few days.

You may have a PICC only while you're in the hospital, or you may go home with it still in place.

How is it inserted?

The PICC is inserted by a healthcare provider specially trained to do this procedure.



When and how will my PICC be removed?

Your PICC will be removed when you no longer need the treatment it is delivering. It will be removed by your healthcare provider, and is usually a painless procedure.

Potential benefits	Risks and potential complications	Alternatives
• Fewer infections and complications are reported than with other types of central catheters. • The catheter can remain in place throughout your therapy. • Treatments can be given over a long period of time.	As with any invasive procedure, there are uncommon but potential risks. Some of these include: • Infection • Inability to position the catheter tip in the right place, making it necessary to repeat the procedure • Blood clot • Bleeding • Vein irritation • Air embolism • Damage to the catheter	Other available options to access your veins may include: • Peripheral IV in the arm or hand • Other options as discussed with your doctor

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