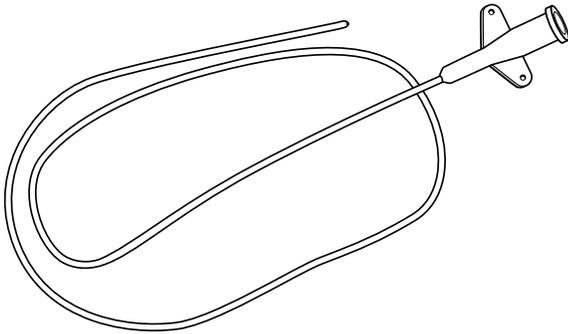


Let's Talk ABOUT...

Central line care, peripheral (PICC)

A peripherally (per-IF-er-ully) inserted central catheter, also called a PICC line, is a tube placed inside a vein. Usually this is placed in the arm, but it may be placed in a vein in the leg or head. The tube is long and skinny and made of soft, flexible plastic.

The tube is long so it reaches the large vein that enters the heart. This vein is called the **superior vena cava** (VEE-na CAVE-uh).



Why does my child need a PICC?

A PICC line is used for IV treatments lasting more than six days. IV treatment may be nutrition, fluids, chemotherapy, or IV medicines. Some medicines have to be given through a central line.

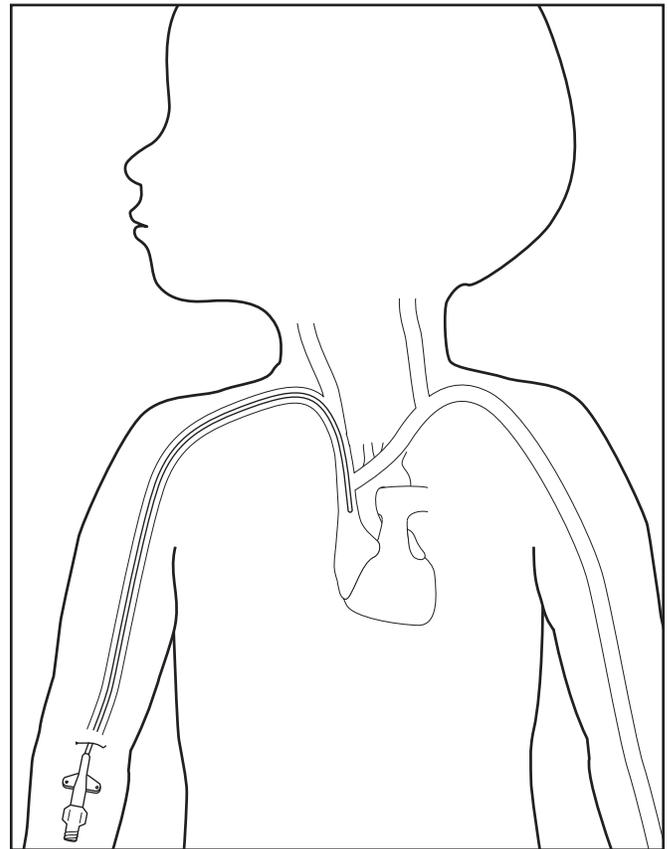
A PICC can have one, two, or three outside openings (lumens). These openings provide a way to put IV treatments into the vein. This means that medicine can be given without a needle stick each time. The PICC line can stay in place for days or weeks.

Your child may have a PICC line only while she is in the hospital, or she may go home with the PICC line.

How and where is a PICC line placed?

A specially trained nurse or doctor will place the PICC line. Your child may receive medicine to help her relax before the procedure.

To prevent infection, the line will be inserted in a sterile setting. This means the nurse or doctor will wear



a gown, mask, and sterile gloves. They will clean your child's skin with a sterilizing soap, and cover the area with a sterile cloth. They do this to prevent the area from getting an infection.

They will place the PICC line through the skin using a small needle placed in a vein in the arm. Then they will gently guide a soft flexible catheter through the needle and into the vein until it reaches the large vein that enters the heart. Once the catheter is in the vein, they will remove the needle and leave the soft PICC line inside the vein. Your child will have a few stitches, or a plastic adhesive device around the catheter so the catheter will not accidentally move.

After the procedure, your child will have an X-ray to make sure the end of the catheter is in the proper place.

They will cover the place where the catheter enters your child's skin with a sterile see-through bandage. There may be some blood at this place when you first look at it. This is normal, and should not cause any problems.

Are there any possible complications?

The most common complications of central lines are infection, catheter movement out of the proper position, and catheter damage. Proper daily care can help prevent these complications.

How will the staff care for the PICC while my child is in the hospital?

To prevent complications, especially infection and movement of the line out of the proper position, the hospital staff will follow these special care procedures:

1. They will place a dressing over the site where the catheter exits the body. The dressing is sealed around the edges and helps keep the site clean and dry.
2. They will change the dressing 24–48 hours after placing the PICC line. To prevent infection the dressing is changed according to the type of dressing material:
 - Transparent dressings (for example Tegaderm™) once a week.
 - Gauze dressings every 48 hours.
 - Specialty dressings (for example Covaderm™) twice a week.
 - Regardless of the type, they will change the dressing when it is wet, loose, or soiled. This helps prevent infection.
3. When they change the dressing, they will check for signs of infection, including redness, swelling, and drainage.
4. If the catheter is not connected to an IV bag, they will flush it at least every 12 hours to prevent clotting.

5. They will change the cap and extension tubing at least once a week.

Note: The cap on the end of the catheter should not be disconnected or used by anyone except a doctor, nurse or trained family member.

How can I prevent central line infection?

Occasionally a central line can become infected. The best way to prevent an infection is to take good care of the line. Do the following care:

1. Make sure all your healthcare providers caring for your child wash their hands with soap and water or alcohol based hand sanitizer before and after caring for your child.
2. If the bandage comes off, or becomes wet or dirty, tell your healthcare provider immediately.
3. Don't let family or friends touch the port unless they put on a glove.
4. Make sure family and friends clean their hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after visiting.
5. Make sure healthcare providers scrub the cap (end of the line) with antiseptic before using the port.
6. Tell your healthcare provider immediately if the tubing becomes disconnected.
7. If your child wears diapers, make sure the cap of the line does not get into the diaper.
8. Do not let the cap dangle in a bathtub.
9. In general keep the dressing clean and dry.
10. Keep the cap clean.

How do I know if the central line is infected?

Watch the line for infection. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you see any of these:

1. The skin where the line enters your child is red
2. The skin where the line enters is swollen.
3. The skin where the line enters is warm to the touch

4. The area where the line enters is painful.
5. Your child has a fever greater than 101 and there is no other known reason for the fever
6. The area where the line enters has pus coming out.
7. The area where the line enters has a foul odor.

How do I care for a PICC line at home?

Your child may need to go home with the PICC line. If so, you will be trained on how to do some of the care of the PICC line at home. It is very important to keep the dressing clean and dry. The care you give the central line at home may be different from the care your child received in the hospital.

1. Make sure before you do anything with the PICC line that you wash your hands.
2. Change the dressing according to the type of dressing used.
3. If a catheter is not being used, flush it once a day. If it is being used for medicines or fluids, flush it between uses.
4. Change the cap and extension tubing on the end of the catheter at least once a week.

Additional suggestions:

Your child should have a “Go Bag” that contains supplies needed to care for your child’s line at home. Keep a clamp with the “Go Bag” so the catheter can be clamped in an emergency.

Use Coflex™ or a tube sock with the toe cut out to cover the PICC line. This also discourages small children from scratching or pulling at the dressing.

Do not let your child swim with her PICC line. Take care to protect the site if she plays contact sports, such as soccer or basketball. Your child’s doctor should approve these activities before she participates.

If your child goes home with a PICC line, a home-care company may provide the following services:

- Supplies for the central line
- Instruction in the following areas:
 - Dressing Change
 - Cap Change
 - Flushing techniques
 - Signs of a complication and what you should do
- Nursing support until you can say and provide your child’s central venous catheter care

Important reference information

Use the following chart to record information about your child’s home care company and catheter.

Home care company:	
Phone number:	
Catheter brand:	
Catheter size:	
Catheter length:	
Heparin flush concentration:	
Volume of flush:	
Frequency of flush:	
Type of dressing:	
Frequency of dressing change:	
What is used to clean the site:	