

About My PICC

For older children and teens

Surrey Memorial Hospital



Children's Health Centre, Level 1 South Building

To make appointments:

604-585-5512

For urgent concerns or having problems with the PICC:

778-242-9702

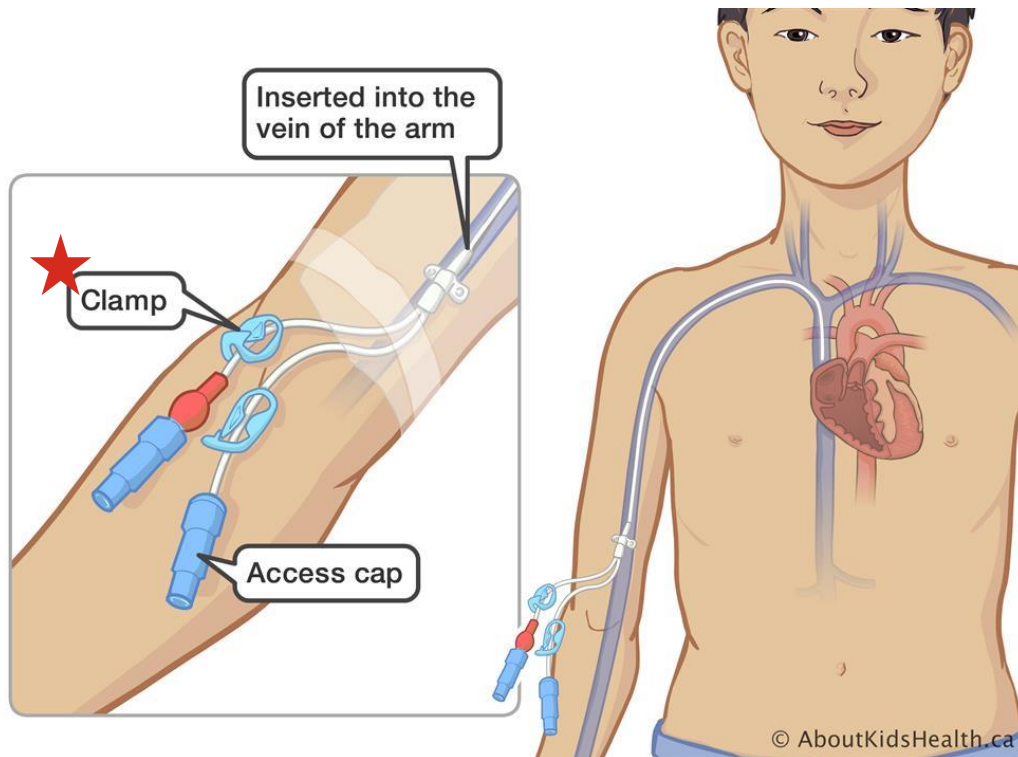
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What is a PICC?

PICC (say *pick*) stands for Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter.

This is a soft plastic tube. We put it in just under the skin, into a vein in your upper arm. The tip of the tube sits in a large vein above your heart.



Used with permission from Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, Ontario



Note: Your PICC might or might not have clamps on the ends.

We cover the area where the PICC enters your body with a clear bandage. The bandage is put on in a special way. We do this to keep the site as clean as possible.

Why a PICC?

Having a PICC means you will have fewer needle pokes. The PICC can stay in place for weeks to months.

We use a PICC to give medicines, fluids, and nutrients. We might also use it to collect blood samples for testing.

What happens before the PICC is put in?

Usually, you don't need to do anything special to prepare. Most of the time, you can eat, drink, and take your medicines like usual. We will let you know if you need to do something different.

We invite you to write down any questions or concerns you might have as you go through this booklet.

Before the PICC is put in, a nurse from the PICC team meets with you and your adult support person. They explain in detail each of these:

- what to expect while the PICC is being put in
- why we are using the PICC for you
- any possible problems that could happen



Our child life specialist meets you as well before the PICC is put in. They help you understand how it is done. If you are feeling nervous or worried, they can stay with you to support you and distract you while we put the PICC in place.

The nurse and child life specialist will answer your questions and make sure you have a good understanding of what is going to happen. While the PICC is being put in, you can also ask questions at any time.

If you agree to have the PICC put in, expect us to ask you, or your adult person, to sign a form allowing us to do this. This is called a consent form.

If you are feeling really nervous about having the PICC put in, we can give you some medicine to help calm your nerves. We give you a pill about 30 minutes before we start.

Will it hurt to have the PICC put in?

You might feel some pressure, pinching, burning, or aching for a short time. We give you different medicines to help with this.

- About one hour before, we put a patch on your arm with numbing cream. This helps numb the skin so you feel the needle less when it goes through your skin. You might still feel a bit of pressure.
- About 30 minutes before, we give you acetaminophen (Tylenol) to relieve any pain you might have while the PICC is being put in and after it is in place.
- When it is time to put the PICC, we use a small needle to inject a numbing medicine into the skin where the PICC goes into your arm. You might feel a slight pinch or burning when we do this.

How is the PICC put in place?

It takes about 30 to 45 minutes to put the PICC in. We will do it either in your room or in one of our treatment rooms on the nursing unit.

If you would like to have someone there to support you, please let us know. They can sit near the head of your bed.

Here is what is going to happen:

- You lie on your back or with the head of the bed raised slightly.
- Your arm is out to the side with your palm facing up.
- We put 2 stickers and a device on your chest. We connect these to a monitor. This helps us track and guide the tip of the PICC to the correct place.
- We remove the patch with the numbing cream from your arm.
- We cover your arm and body with a blue waterproof paper. This keeps germs off your skin and our tools and equipment. You might hear us call this a “sea of blue”.
- We clean your whole arm with special kind of soap that removes any germs that might be on your skin. We call it antiseptic soap.
- We inject the numbing medicine to freeze the skin.



Monitor

- We wrap a large rubber strip, called a tourniquet (say *tour-neh-key*), tightly around your upper arm to slow blood flow out of your arm. This makes your veins fill up with blood so they are easier to see.
- We poke a needle through your skin into a vein in your arm. You might feel some pressure as we do this.
- We guide the tube through the needle up until the tip is in the large vein above your heart.
- We use ultrasound images to confirm we are in the right place.



Ultrasound machine screen

After the PICC is in place, we cover the site where the PICC enters your body with a clear bandage. This helps to keep the area clean. It is normal to see some dry blood on the bandage. We will change the bandage if this happens.

We might decide to add a special device called a SecurAcath™ (say *seh-cure-ah-cath*). This device anchors to your skin and secures the PICC tubing. It helps keep your PICC from moving. It stays in place the whole time you have your PICC in place.



Other questions you might have

Can I bath or shower?

You can bath or shower 24 hours after the PICC is put in.

You need to keep the PICC area dry. Have someone help you cover the bandage and PICC with plastic wrap like cling wrap or a plastic bag. This will help keep the area dry.

Never place the arm with the PICC directly under water, even when it is covered with plastic.

If your bandage gets wet, it needs to be changed right away.

Can I use my arm with the PICC?

Yes, you can.

For the first 24 hours, we suggest you rest your arm. We encourage you to gently use your arm for every day activities. This helps blood flow in your arm.

After 24 hours, start with gentle activities as long as you are not having any pain in the arm. It is safe to move your arm, in fact, it is good to keep your arm moving in all directions.

Do not do any sports that could cause damage or result in the arm or PICC being hit. Examples of sports: hockey, soccer, basketball, gymnastics.

Do not do any activities that might cause the bandage to get wet. This could cause the bandage to come off. Examples of activities: swimming, paddle boarding, any activities where you sweat a lot.

Do not lift anything very heavy with your PICC arm.

Always keep your emergency kit with you in case the PICC moves or is pulled out by accident (see what is in the kit on the next page).

What is in the emergency kit?

Your kit has gloves, a sterile cap, tape, a small clamp, sterile gauze sponges, and alcohol swabs.

We review these with you after we have put the PICC in and before you leave.

**Will I have any pain after the PICC is put in?**

Your arm might be a bit sore for a few days after the PICC was put in.

- Try putting a warm dry compress on your arm. This helps reduce soreness and improves blood flow.
 - Make a warm compress by placing a warm washcloth into a bag or use a dry towel warmed in the dryer.
 - Place the warm compress above where your PICC enters your skin.
 - Do this 4 times a day for 20 minutes each time.
 - Continue this for at least 3 days.
- Try other ways to help ease the soreness or discomfort such as listening to music or watching a movie. Focusing on other things can help.
- If you need pain medicine, you can take regular acetaminophen (Tylenol).

It should not hurt when medicines or fluid are put through the PICC.

Can I go to school?

If your healthcare team says it is okay, you can return to school. They will need to make a plan with the school before you return.

Make sure your friends and classmates do not touch or play with the PICC. You might find it best to keep it covered with long sleeves.

Keep your emergency kit with you at all times. We suggest you keep everything in a waist pack or crossbody bag and wear it all the time.

What else do I need to do to look after my PICC?

Always keep the bandage clean and dry. Make sure the edges of the bandage are sealed over the site. The PICC bandage keeps the site clean and helps hold the PICC in place.

Expect us to change the bandage and the cap on the PICC every week.

Here is what you can do to prevent any problems with your PICC:

- Always wash your hands before handling the PICC or touching on or near the bandage.



- Keep a protective cover or wrap around the PICC when it is not being used. Make sure you keep the PICC covered when sleeping.



- Try not to do anything that tugs or pulls on the PICC. Take extra care when taking clothes off and putting clothes on. This will keep the PICC from being pulled on by accident.



- Keep sharp objects such as scissors away from the PICC.



- **Do not** let anyone use your PICC arm to do any of these things:
 - ✗ Take your blood pressure.
 - ✗ Take a blood sample.
 - ✗ Start an intravenous.

When will my PICC be taken out?

Your healthcare team will arrange for it to be taken out when they feel you no longer need it. It takes only about 5 to 10 minutes to remove it.


Before taking the PICC out, your healthcare team will explain how it is done.

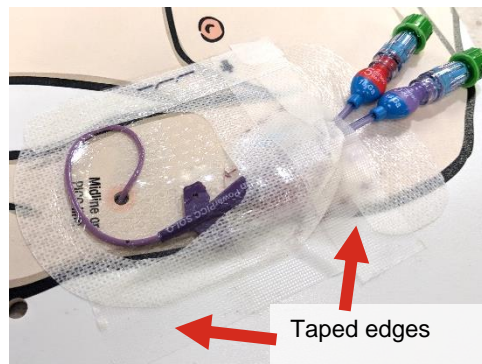
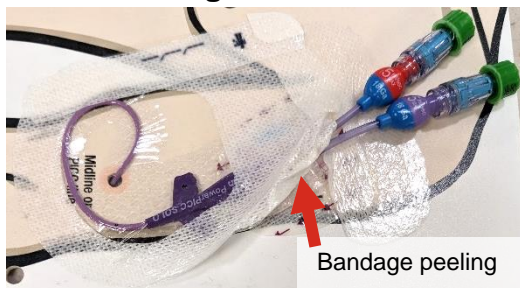
Troubleshooting

Problem	What to do and who to call
Feel sick <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fever 38°C or higher - chills - sweating not caused by heat or exercise - feel very sleepy all the time - feel dizzy 	These need medical care right away! Tell your adult support person. Call the Children's Health Centre. 778-242-9702 Go to the nearest Emergency.
Pain <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - continues after the first 48 hours - does not go away with warm compresses and pain medicine 	
Swelling on the PICC side <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a lot of swelling in your face, chest, neck, or arm on the PICC side 	
Fluid leaking or draining <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - leaking or draining from around the site - clear, yellow, or pink coloured 	
Heart flutters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fluttering or thumping in your chest 	
Trouble breathing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - can't catch your breath 	

Problem	What to do and who to call
PICC pulled out all the way	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Get sterile gauze sponges out of the emergency kit. 2. Place one sterile gauze over the PICC site. 3. Put firm pressure on your arm over the gauze for 10 minutes. 4. After 10 minutes, check to see if the bleeding has stopped. <p>If bleeding has not stopped:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Keep firm pressure on the area <u>and</u> go to the nearest Emergency. <p>If bleeding has stopped:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Wash your hands. 6. Get a new sterile gauze sponge and tape out of the emergency kit. 7. Cover the site with a new sterile gauze sponge and tape in place. 8. Call the Child Health Centre. We might ask you to come to the hospital. Bring the PICC tube with you.
PICC pulled out part way	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Open your emergency kit. 2. Tape the PICC in place. 3. Cover the part of the PICC that was pulled out with a sterile gauze sponge. 4. Call the Child Health Centre right away. 5. Go to the hospital.

Problem	What to do and who to call
PICC leaking or broken	<p>The PICC might have a hole or a crack.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stay calm. 2. Open your emergency kit. 3. Use the clamp from the emergency kit to clamp the tubing above where it is leaking. 4. Clean the area where it is leaking with an alcohol swab. 5. Place a sterile gauze sponge under the broken area. 6. Tape this gauze to the PICC tubing. 7. Wrap the gauze around the tubing. 8. Tape this gauze roll to your arm. 9. Call the Child Health Centre right away. 10. Go to the hospital. <p>*If the PICC broke off completely, bring the broken piece with you.</p>
Skin around the PICC is sore <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - redness - swelling - hurts - yellowish fluid (pus) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell your adult support person. 2. Call the Child Health Centre so we can look at it as soon as possible.

Problem	What to do and who to call
Cap comes off of PICC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wash your hands. 2. If there is a clamp on the tubing, make sure it is closed.  3. Open your emergency kit. 4. Scrub the open end of the PICC with an alcohol swab for at least 15 seconds. 5. Allow the end to dry completely. This can take 1 to 2 minutes. 6. Screw a new cap onto the end of the PICC, making sure you don't touch the PICC end. 7. Wrap a sterile gauze sponge around the cap. 8. Tape the gauze to your arm. 9. Call the Child Health Centre right away. 10. Go to the hospital for a cap change.
Loose bandage	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wash your hands. 2. Get the tape out of the emergency kit. 3. Tape along the edges of the bandage. 4. Call the Child Health Centre to have a new bandage put on.



Problem	What to do and who to call
Bandage comes off	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Wash your hands.2. Get a sterile gauze sponge and the tape out of the emergency kit.3. Cover the site where the bandage was with the sterile gauze sponge.4. Tape around all the edges.5. Call the Child Health Centre to have a new bandage put on.

My Thoughts and Questions

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This information does not replace the advice
given to you by your health care provider.

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