

Information Sheet

Hospital in the Home (HITH)

Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter (PICC)



If you have any English language difficulties, please ask staff to book an interpreter.

From home contact the Telephone Interpreter Service on 9605 3056.

Services are provided free of charge. Ask staff if this information is available in your preferred language.

What is a PICC?

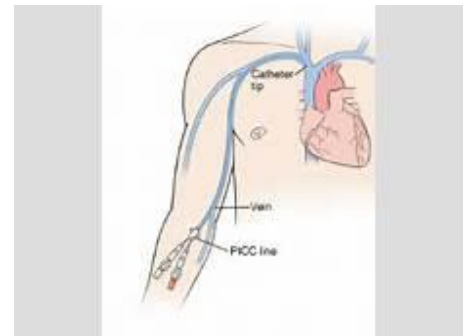
A PICC line is a Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter. It is a long, thin, small, flexible tube that is put into a vein, usually in the upper arm. The PICC tube ends in a large vein in the chest the other end can be seen on your arm.

Why do I need a PICC?

The PICC will reduce the need for you to have needles inserted into your arm for your medication. This is especially important when receiving long term medication. The PICC will be removed at the end of treatment. Sometimes the nurse may also use the PICC to take blood samples.

Care of the PICC

- **Do not remove the PICC or tubes at any time** e.g. Showering or change of clothing.
- Make sure the site is kept protected and clean and the dressing remains intact. Limit use of arm e.g. housework, gardening or gym.
- Whenever showering, always use a plastic shower sleeve. A nurse will show you how to tape the sleeve to make it water proof. These can be supplied by HITH staff or you can have a bath without placing upper arm in the water.
- Do not go swimming while your PICC is in place.



Monitoring Treatment

- The tube should be secured to your shoulder to prevent the tube being accidentally pulled.
- Avoid pulling of the tube.
- You will be given a bag to carry your medication or Continuous Ambulatory Delivery Device (CADD) Pump around in or you can use your own suitable bag.

Nursing Care

- To lower the risk of infection the PICC dressing will be changed once a week or earlier if needed.
- To lower the risk of complications your arm will be measured each time your dressing is changed. The nurses will do this as part of the care to make sure that the tube has not moved and your arm is not swelling.
- At every visit the PICC will be flushed with normal saline, and the dressing and site will be checked to see that all are intact and working properly.
- Your tube may also be used to take bloods as needed.

What to watch for

Local reactions - swelling, redness and pain at the site or to the arm or hand that has the PICC tube can occur and should be reported to the HITH staff at the time of the visit or by telephone.

When to contact Hospital in the Home – 9871 3197

If you notice any of the following:

- The CADD Pump is alarming continuously. Reading the screen message prior to calling would help the nurses to identify the problem. Little beeps are expected when the fluid is getting low.
- Fluid is leaking anywhere in the tube or under the dressing.

For Urgent/Life Threatening Medical Attention, call 000

Protecting Your Privacy

Eastern Health is committed to protecting your privacy. We will keep your personal information secure and will disclose information about you only when required by law. We comply with relevant information and privacy legislation. If you would like more information, please ask a staff member or visit our Web site www.easternhealth.org.au

Eastern Health is accredited by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards.
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