

PICC Home Care Instructions

Education Checklist

- ☐ Watch Get Well Network videos on PICC care
- ☐ Review this handout on PICC care
- ☐ Attend PICC class in the Family Resource Center
- ☐ You will be able to take care of the PICC line:
 - Ways to prevent infection, flushing and S-A-S-H
- ☐ Vendor and pump teaching
- ☐ Complete 24-48 hours of care of your child

What is a Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter (PICC)?

A PICC ("pick") is a soft plastic catheter (tube) that is used to give medications, fluids, blood, and nutrition into the vein. It can also be used to draw blood so your child will have less needle sticks. It is a longer tube than a regular IV. It is flexible so your child can move their arm or leg. The PICC can last a long time if your child needs it in the hospital or at home.

How many types of PICC are there?

There are 2 types: (type of tube is decided by the doctor)

- **Single lumen**, 1 tube, allows one medication or fluid to be given at a time.
- **Double lumen**, 2 tubes, allows more than one medication or fluid to be given at the same time.

How is the PICC placed?

The PICC is placed by a specialist (a person with special skills) in the sedation unit, at the bedside, in the treatment room, or in the Operating Room.

- It is placed into a vein in the upper arm or the leg. The specialist or nurse will decide where it should go.
- The PICC is placed so that the end of the tube ends in the large vein near the heart. An x-ray will be taken after it is placed to make sure it is in the right place.



Single Lumen



Double Lumen

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- To help with the pain, a cream may be used to numb the area where the PICC will be put in. Other medications are given by mouth or in the vein (IV) to help lessen the pain or your child's fear when the PICC is put in.
- If your child is having a PICC placed under general anesthesia (your child is given medication to help them sleep during the procedure), you must first give permission to the anesthesia doctor by phone or in person before the procedure.

What happens after the PICC is placed?

The area where the PICC is placed may be sore for a couple of days. Your child should use their arm/leg as much as possible. This will help the soreness go away faster and keep the arm/leg from becoming stiff and painful. This movement will not hurt the PICC.

- Most children do not have pain from the PICC. If your child is having pain, warm packs can be used to the sore area for comfort.

How do I prevent infection with the PICC line?

There is a risk of infection because there is a small opening in the skin where the PICC goes into the body. There are many things we can do to help decrease the risk of infection.

1. **HANDWASHING:** You **must** wash your hands thoroughly for 30 seconds before touching the PICC line (scrubbing under the nails), dry with a paper towel and turn off the water faucet using the paper towel.
2. Use hand sanitizer to clean your hands in between tasks (after you wash your hands).
3. Remove artificial nails while your child has a PICC. Artificial nails can spread germs to your child. Remove gels and nail polish during treatment.
4. Your child needs a bath/shower **every day** and needs to brush their teeth *at least two times a day*.
5. During the bath/shower, for extra safety, wrap a clean washcloth around the PICC and tape the edges to the skin. Use a cling plastic wrap such as Saran™ wrap or Press'N Seal™ wrap to cover the dressing. Wrap the edges with tape to prevent water from leaking in and getting the dressing wet. After the bath/shower, remove the plastic bag or plastic wrap and make sure the dressing on the PICC is dry. If the dressing is wet, your home health nurse **must** change it the same day.
6. Change bed linens at least once a week, after the weekly dressing/cap change, or earlier if the sheets are dirty.
7. Dressing changes are done **every 7 days** (in the hospital or at home) to help prevent infection. At home, a home health nurse will change the dressing and cap once a week.
8. If the dressing is dirty, loose, or wet, it needs to be changed. Check the dressing often to make sure it is on and in place.
 - a. If it is loose or wet, tell your nurse so that they can change the dressing as soon as possible.
 - b. If the dressing is lifting or peeling, place a piece of tape on the place where it's peeling so your child doesn't get an infection and/or the line doesn't come out.
9. Choose an ideal area at home for PICC care:
 - a. Avoid bathrooms and the kitchen because these areas have more germs.
 - b. Turn off ceiling fans, air conditioning, heaters, and close the windows.

- c. Keep pets and other children away during care.
 - d. Use a new non-porous surface (ex: plastic cutting board) for PICC care. Clean with antibacterial wipes, soap & water, alcohol wipes, or vinegar before and after each use. ALLOW TO AIR DRY.
10. The PICC provides a direct way for germs to enter the body. It is very important to clean the end of the blue cap before every use for **20 seconds & let it dry for 10 seconds**.
11. We don't teach you to wear gloves. Washing your hands with soap and water and using hand sanitizer often keep your hands clean so you can care for your child's PICC.

What are some important things to know about the PICC?

1. *Always* use medical tape – do not use Scotch™ tape, duct tape, electrical tape, or packaging tape.
2. No swimming while there is a PICC in place. Do not put the PICC under water during a bath.
3. No contact sports or rough play (the PICC can break or accidentally come out).
4. Cover the PICC with long sleeve clothing. Make sure the clothing or cover is NOT too tight. Keeping the line covered protects it and also helps your child use their arm/leg as normally as possible.
5. Carry an emergency kit (gauze, tape, blue clamp, alcohol pad) with you/your child whenever you leave the house. **The nurse should make this for you before you go home.**
6. If your child goes to school, give information about the PICC to the school nurse. Let them know of any activities your child cannot do.
7. When you leave your child with someone else, make sure they know how to care for the PICC in an emergency.
8. With younger and/or active children, you may need a second person to help hold the child when caring for the line and giving medication so that they do not touch or pull the PICC.

What is the best way to prevent infection?

HANDWASHING is the #1 way to prevent infection.

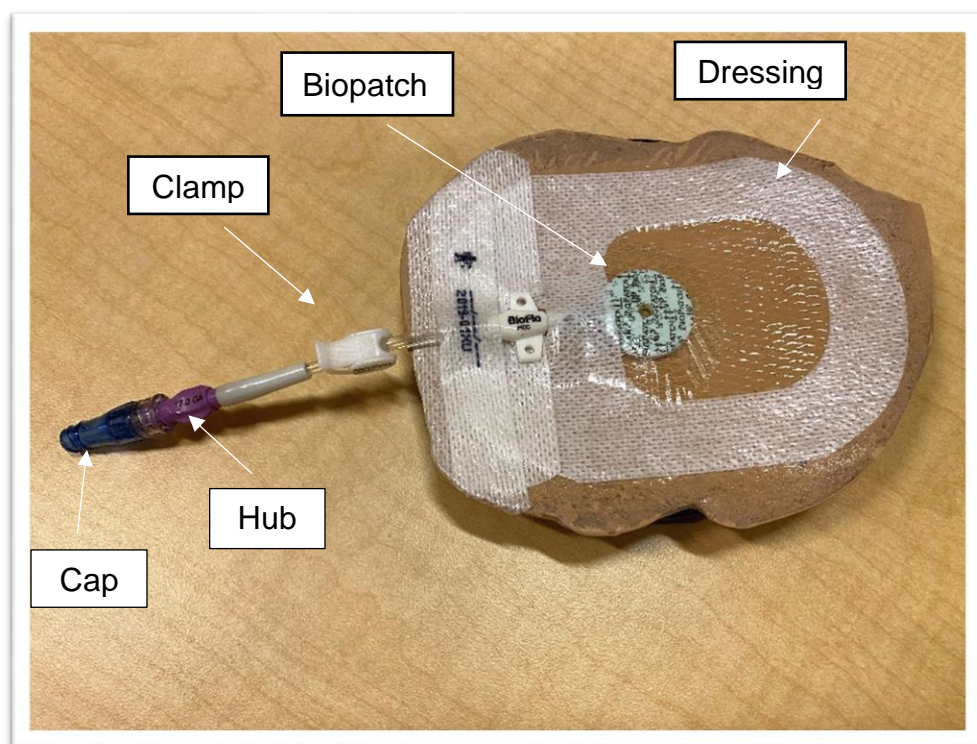
Follow these steps to wash your hands before any PICC care:

1. Use antibacterial soap and wash hands completely for 30 seconds.
2. Make sure you scrub your hands together well while washing.
3. Friction (scrubbing your hands) kills germs, not the soap.
4. Wash each finger, including the thumb and under each nail.
5. Make sure your nails are clean. You may need to use a nailbrush to clean them.
6. Make sure your hands are healthy with no rashes or infections.
7. Dry your hands with a paper towel and use the paper towel to turn the faucet off.

When will the PICC be removed?

The nurse will take the PICC out when your child no longer needs it. The nurse will remove the dressing and tape and gently pull the PICC out. Pulling the tape off the arm/leg may be uncomfortable. Removing the actual PICC does not usually hurt. The nurse will place gauze and a dressing over the site to prevent bleeding. You may remove the dressing after 24 hours.

What are the different parts of the PICC?



NOTES:

How do I flush the PICC and give medication? S-A-S-H

S=Saline (salt water)

A=Antibiotic or Administer (give) medicine

S=Saline (salt water)

H=Heparin (stops PICC from forming blood clots)

Supplies needed:

2 normal saline syringes

1 heparin syringe (dose based on weight)

4 alcohol pads

Medication, if using

Wash your hands for 30 seconds with soap and water and use a paper towel to dry. Use paper towel to turn the faucet off. Wash tabletop/work area and take syringes out of the packages and lay on the clean table.

1. Open the clamp.
2. Use hand sanitizer **after** opening packages of supplies and opening the clamp and **before** touching the line.
3. Open 2 alcohol pads.
4. Use hand sanitizer.
5. Clean the PICC cap with an alcohol pad for 20 seconds and let dry for 10 seconds.
6. Without letting go of the PICC, pick up the **NORMAL SALINE** syringe. With the cap on, pump the barrel of the syringe (to break the seal). Then take off the cap and push the air gently out of the syringe. Attach the syringe to the cap, flush with 5-10ml normal saline (ask your doctor or nurse how much saline to give your child). Take off the empty syringe.
7. Clean the cap again with a new alcohol pad for 20 seconds and dry for 10 seconds.
8. Attach the **ANTIBIOTIC** or medicine tubing to the PICC cap.
9. Give the medicine as taught by your home care nurse.
10. When the medicine is done, take off the syringe or tubing and throw it away as taught by your home health nurse.
11. Wash hands and clean cap with a new alcohol pad for 20 seconds and let dry for 10 seconds.
12. Without letting go of the PICC cap, pick up the next **NORMAL SALINE** syringe. With the cap on, pump the barrel of the syringe. Then take off the cap and push the air gently out of the syringe. Attach the syringe and flush 5-10ml normal saline and remove empty syringe.
13. Clean cap again with new alcohol pad for 20 seconds and let dry for 10 seconds.
14. Without letting go of the PICC, pick up the **HEPARIN**. With the cap on, pump the barrel of the syringe. Then take off the cap and push the air gently out of the syringe.
15. **Discard (get rid of) 2ml of the heparin into a paper towel or trash can (it comes in 5ml syringes and you only need 3ml).**
16. Attach the syringe, flush with **3ml of heparin**, and take off the empty syringe.
17. Close the clamp.

****If you are not using the PICC for medicine, you MUST flush the line with **NORMAL SALINE** and **HEPARIN** once a day to keep it working.**

- Follow the same cleaning steps as explained above. It is best to do this at the same time each day. When done in the morning, if there is a problem you have time to call your doctor and come to the hospital.
- Flush each lumen with 5-10ml normal saline and 3ml Heparin every day. If your child has 2 lumens, be sure to repeat the steps for the second lumen.

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PICC Problem Solving

PROBLEM	WHY IT HAPPENS	WHAT TO DO
Fever, chills, soreness, redness, swelling or pus at the insertion site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call doctor right away or go to the Emergency Department (ED). • Take temperature
Red skin or rash where the tape is.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allergy or sensitivity to tape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify your nurse or doctor so that someone can check the skin. • May need to have dressing or tape changed.
Phlebitis -Red streak up arm, unable to move arm, soreness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inflammation (swelling) or irritation of the vein 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify doctor right away. • Apply warm packs (not hot) to the sore area.
PICC will not flush	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line may be clamped • Line may be twisted or bent • Line may be clotted (blood clot at the end of the line) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclamp the line. • Remove the twist. • Straighten the arm. • If still unable to flush, call doctor as soon as possible or go to the ED. • Remember, when flushing the line, NEVER USE FORCE. Using force can break the line.
PICC is leaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cap on the line is not screwed on tightly. • A tear in the line, which may happen near the white plastic clamp. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clamp line (closest to the body) immediately. • Tighten the cap. • Check line for tears. • If you see a leak, wrap it with sterile gauze & secure with a blue clamp. • If you don't have a blue clamp, fold line in half and tape it down to the skin. • Call doctor right away or go to the ED. • Remember to make an emergency kit and keep it with you at all times. • Always have a blue clamp with you (should be in the emergency kit).
PICC accidentally comes out		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If line is completely out, put sterile gauze over the site. If bleeding, press down until it stops. • If line is partly out, DO NOT push the line back in. Use

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		<p>gauze and tape the line to keep it in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call doctor right away or go to the ED.
Cap comes off		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLAMP THE LINE RIGHT AWAY! • DO NOT PUT THE DIRTY CAP BACK ON! • Wash your hands, clean hub with alcohol for 20 seconds and let it dry for 10 seconds, wrap the end in sterile gauze and tape to secure. • Contact your home health nurse or return to the clinic or ED for a cap change immediately. • Monitor for signs of infection.

Caring for the PICC at Home

My home health agency: _____

Phone number: _____

Ask your nurse to help fill in the information below before you go home:

PICC placed by: _____ on (date): _____

____ 1 lumen ____ 2 lumens

The catheter is _____ cm long. Outside length is _____ cm long.

The catheter is in the _____ vein of the _____ arm/leg.

How do I get the PICC supplies?

We will work with you to make sure you get the PICC supplies you need before you go home. Your Clinical Care Coordinator (CCC), or discharge planner, will be in touch to arrange care and supplies. Based on your insurance and where you live, a home vendor company will be assigned. They will send supplies to the hospital or to your home. Make sure to call the company when you are running low on supplies. **PLEASE call at least 3-5 days before your supplies run out.**

My home supply company: _____

Phone number: _____

How do I store the PICC supplies?

- Keep supplies in a clean, dry place and out of reach of children and pets. Ex: a closet.
- Do not store supplies in the kitchen or bathroom.
- It is easier to do the PICC care when all of the supplies are organized. Create supply kits by labeling plastic zip-lock bags with supplies you need for each medication administration or flush.
- Do not re-use any supplies.

Emergency Kit

Blue clamp
2x2 gauze
Alcohol pads
Medical tape