



Peripherally Inserted Central Catheters (PICC): Benefits and Risk Information Sheet

A Peripherally Inserted Central Catheters (PICC) is a long, thin flexible tube that is inserted into a vein in the upper arm. It is a form of an intravenous access. It is considered to be a central line because the tip of the PICC ends in a large vein in your chest. This large vein is call the superior vena cava (SVC). This location allows for medications and fluids to be quickly distributed throughout the body. The PICC is inserted using a sterile technique by a specially trained nurse or physician.

A PICC may be inserted for a variety of reasons such as:

- Administrations of medications that that can be irritable to a normal vein
- Medium or longer term Antibiotics
- To take or give frequent blood and blood products
- Chemotherapy
- Continuous infusions
- Prolonged infusion therapy
- If there is difficultly placing a peripheral intravenous catheter
- Total parenteral nutrition (TPN), a form of liquid nutrition

A PICC can also allow a person to go home from the hospital early. If taken care of properly, a PICC can remain in place for several months

What Problems can happen with a PICC?

- A blood clot (thrombus) can form at the tip of the PICC which may cause it to clog, or cause deep vein thrombosis (DVT) in the arm veins
- Inflammation of the vein (phlebitis) where the PICC is placed
- Infection in the PICC or at the site of insertion. Signs and symptoms of infection may include fever, chills, redness, swelling or drainage from the PICC insertion site (1-2% risk)
- PICC movement (malposition). The PICC tip may move from its original positon
- Small amount of bleeding and bruising at the insertion site on the arm when the PICC is inserted

If you have any concerns or are worried about your PICC line, contact your healthcare provider or come to the emergency department.

I have read the benefits and risk of having a PICC line inserted and have been given the opportunity to have my questions in regards to this PICC line answered.

Signature _____ Date: _____