

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### What are activities that I can and cannot do after the insertion?

Generally, you are encouraged to engage yourself in some form of exercise. However, sports like tennis, golf or other forms of vigorous activities are discouraged. There is a risk of catheter migration and dislodgement due to the excessive movements required during these activities, which may cause bleeding and requires immediate medical attention.

You can bathe or shower as usual. However, care must be taken to prevent PICC dressing from getting wet by covering the PICC area with waterproof cover or plastic sheet when showering.

Water sports such as swimming is not allowed as submerging your PICC in water will increase the risk of infection.

### Can I go on holidays with PICC?

Please communicate with your doctor before planning a trip abroad. Routine care of PICC must continue during your travel.

### How will I know if something is wrong with my PICC after insertion?

Complications may arise with your PICC.

Seek medical help from your doctor/ nurse at the Specialist Oncology Clinic during office hours or at the hospital Department of Emergency Medicine after office hours, if any one of the following conditions occurs:

- Fever  $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$

- Chills or uncontrolled shivering
- Chest pain or difficulty breathing
- Swelling, redness, itch, pain or discharges at or around the catheter site
- Uncontrolled bleeding from the catheter insertion site
- Pain or swelling in the face, neck, chest or arm on the side where the catheter is inserted
- Leakage or cracks on catheter; dislodged catheter
- Loose or broken stitches
- Rashes or blisters on catheter surrounding skin
- Any other abnormal and/or prolonged symptoms, which cause concerns

## Contact Us

Contact our Specialty Nurse for further enquiries during operational hours.

Telephone : 8218 1516

Monday to Friday : 8.30am to 5.30pm

Saturday : 8.30am to 12.30pm

Sunday/ Public Holidays : Closed

**Disclaimer:** The National Cancer Centre Singapore does not endorse or promote the use of any product mentioned in this brochure. The information is presented in a summary to provide an understanding and for knowledge only, and may not contain information about all aspects of care. It does not recommend self-management of health problems or replace consultation with your doctor. You should never disregard medical advice or delay seeking treatment because of something you have read in this brochure.

©2023

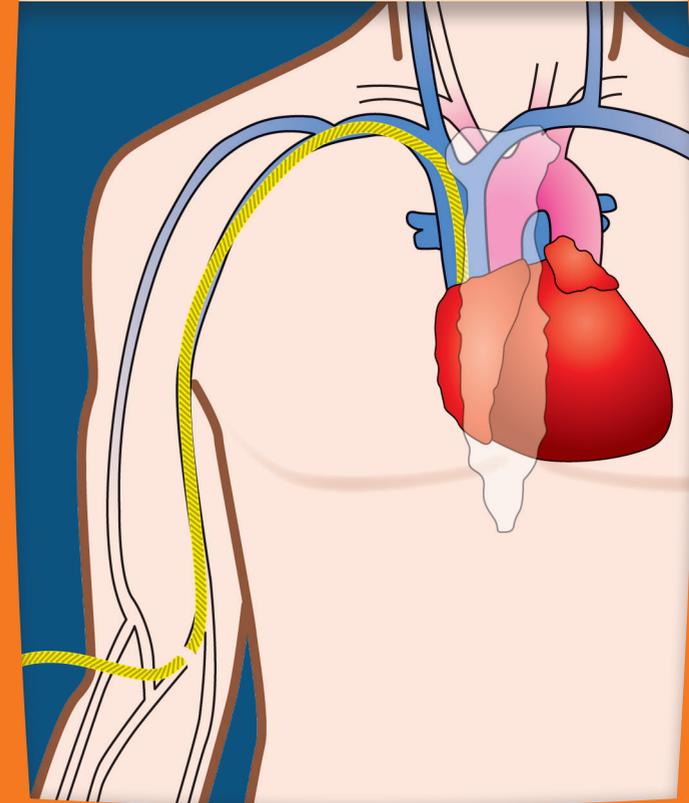
Copyright © National Cancer Centre Singapore

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher. However, this



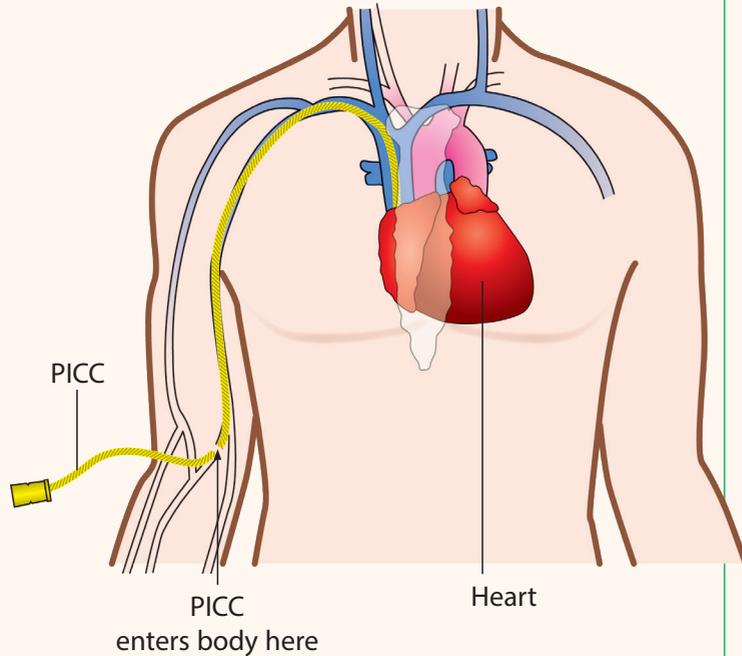
Document No. NUR-EDU-PEM-011/0317

## PATIENT EDUCATION UNDERSTANDING PERIPHERALLY INSERTED CENTRAL CATHETER (PICC)



## What is a Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter (PICC)?

Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter, commonly known as PICC, is a thin, flexible hollow tube inserted into a vein via the upper arm. It can be placed in either arm.



## Why a PICC is needed?

Your doctor may have suggested the insertion of a PICC for the administration of one of the following:

- Chemotherapy agents
- Long term antibiotics
- Blood & blood products
- Parenteral nutrition.

## How is the PICC inserted?

- This is an outpatient procedure, and you will be placed under local anaesthesia (LA) by a specialist doctor called interventional radiologist. Consent will be taken before the procedure.
- The site chosen will either be on the right or left of the arm.
- The doctor will make a small opening on the skin near the bend of the elbow. The tube is threaded into the selected vein to reach the large vein just above the heart. Stitches or securement device will be placed to secure the catheter on the arm.
- A chest X-ray will be done to verify the placement of the catheter after the procedure.
- You will be observed after the procedure to ensure that you are fit to go home.
- The whole procedure is estimated to take half a day.

## What are the risks associated with PICC insertion?

As with most surgical procedures, there are risks such as bleeding or infection. Other risks associated with a PICC placement include:

- Tip of the catheter is not in the best position
- Accidental puncture of the artery which may cause bleeding

## How should the PICC be cared for?

PICC requires regular weekly routine care which includes:

- Changing of the catheter site dressing
- Flushing of the catheter
- Changing of the needleless connector

You/ your family or caregiver will be shown how to perform the PICC routine care.

## Does the PICC need to be removed when it is no longer needed?

After the completion of your treatment, your doctor will assess and review your need for the PICC. If the PICC is no longer needed, it will be removed either by a trained nurse or a doctor.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### Things to note before a PICC insertion.

Fasting is not required for this procedure. More information will be given after you have been scheduled for the insertion.