

PICC Line

A patient's guide



A Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter, or "PICC line," is a thin, long, soft-plastic tube that functions as an intravenous (IV) line. A PICC line allows nurses and doctors to give patients medications and fluids on a frequent basis and can remain in place for as long as IV therapy is needed.

PICC lines provide many benefits

Long-term central access to veins is essential for managing patients with cancer, stomach and intestine malfunctions, and certain malformations existing at birth. It is also essential for those who need access to medications or blood products. A PICC line is useful for all of these conditions and is a safe and effective alternative to other conventional and implanted devices used to access veins.

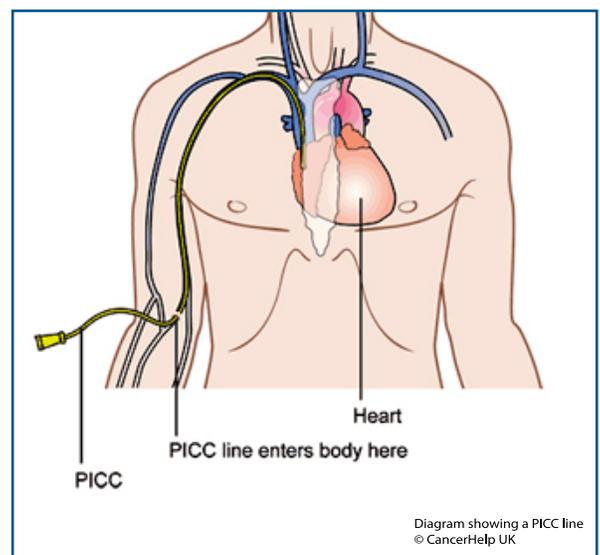
- **Long-term use**—With proper care and maintenance, a PICC line may remain in place for long periods of time with minimal complications, ideal for patients with chronic diseases requiring long-term IV therapy such as, antibiotics or nutrition.
- **Low risk for infection**—PICC lines are usually inserted in the upper arm, which is cleaner than other areas where other central lines might be inserted, such as the neck or groin. Use of a cleaner area, combined with longer-term use, eliminates the risk of infection, as PICC lines require less replacement as other devices.
- **Decreased skin puncture for blood sampling**—PICC lines can be used to draw blood samples for testing. Since PICC lines have long-term use, repeated skin pricks can be avoided, reducing the potential for infection and reducing pain.
- **Versatility**—PICC lines can be used to administer antibiotics, blood and blood products, anti-cancer drugs, IV fluids, and nutrients.

For more information about PICC line procedures and scheduling, contact us at (520) 545-1906

Procedures are fairly simple

Procedures are performed by a certified technologist who specializes in vascular interventional radiology. Using ultrasound and fluoroscopic (X-Ray) guidance, the technologist will locate the large veins in the upper arm, cleanse the arm, and cover it with a sterile cloth to prevent infection.

The technologist will place a tourniquet on the arm and apply medication to numb the area where the PICC line will be inserted. Using ultrasound or real-time imaging and a small needle or catheter to enter the vein, a PICC line will be guided into the vein near the heart and positioned in the right location. Once the PICC line is inserted, the technologist will cover the insertion area with a clear, sterile dressing and pressure bandage. Most patients feel little or no discomfort during this procedure. Inserting a PICC line takes 1 - 1.5 hours to complete.



*Line can be placed in either arm.

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PICC Line (continued)

There is little preparation for procedures

Patients may take part in a consultation to determine if he or she is a good candidate for a PICC line procedure. During the consultation, the technologist will review any risks, benefits, and possible complications. Patients are encouraged to ask questions during this time. Patients may be instructed to stop taking certain medications prior to the procedure.

There are very few risks, side effects and complications for PICC lines

- Mild discomfort when the needle is inserted into the vein
- Difficulty successfully inserting the IV catheter if veins are scarred or partially clotted
- Puncture of a blood vessel, nerve or tendon near the insertion area
- Movement or obstruction of the catheter, possibly requiring catheter removal or repositioning
- Vein clotting or inflammation
- Infection at the insertion site or in the bloodstream, possibly requiring catheter removal or antibiotic treatment

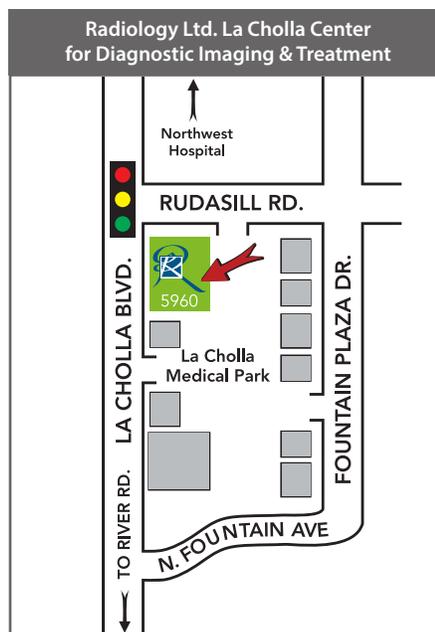
Patients should call their doctor immediately if he or she experiences any of the following symptoms after a PICC line insertion

- Pain
- Fever
- Excessive, bright red bleeding (soaking the dressing with blood)
- Warmth, redness or swelling of the arm or insertion area
- Tear or break in the PICC line catheter or tubing
- Continuous alarm of the IV pump, even after flushing the catheter
- Leakage of IV fluid around the insertion area

Our team strives to offer PICC line patients the very best quality of care

- **Comfort**—The procedure is performed at one of our on-site interventional radiology suites
- **Ease**—The entire procedure can be performed on the X-Ray table, eliminating the need for patients to be moved from location to another
- **Verification**—Board-certified radiologists with expertise in vascular interventional imaging are on-site and verify PICC line placement

The PICC line procedure is available for patients at two Radiology Ltd. locations



Radiology Ltd. is committed to the health of Southern Arizona by providing the most comprehensive interventional services.

Our team strives to offer patients the very best quality of care and customer service.

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