

Oncology and Haematology Department

Everything I need to know about going home with a PICC line

Introduction

A PICC line is a Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter. A PICC line has been inserted into your arm to allow you to have intravenous chemotherapy administered. The line also allows the nursing staff to obtain blood samples if these are required. The PICC line has been inserted into your arm and travels up into your chest and down into one of the large veins. After insertion the line will be held in place by a device called a stat lock.

Great care must be taken to avoid damage to the PICC line and it is your responsibility to report any changes or problems to the nursing staff. The nursing staff will look after the line whilst you are in hospital. When you go home you will be required to attend the day unit once weekly to have the line flushed and redressed.

Care of your PICC line

- Keeping the exit site clean and dry
- Avoid touching the line site with your hands.
- Immediately after the line insertion, a sterile dressing will be applied.
- The day after insertion, a transparent waterproof dressing will be applied and this can be left on the exit site for up to one week. If it needs to be changed more often, please let the nursing staff know.



Patient Information

Personal hygiene

- Your PICC line should not be immersed in water. Therefore you should not bathe or swim with your line in.
- Showers are permitted. The dressing is waterproof and should therefore be left in place. Pat it dry when you have finished showering.
- Do not use sponges or flannels around the line or line site. They harbour germs and can cause potentially serious infections. Use running water only.

Other precautions

- Do not open or move the clamp on the line.
- Do not remove the bionector (cap) from the ends of the line.
- Do not pull on, or pinch the PICC line.
- Be very careful when using scissors or nail clippers, anywhere near the PICC line.
- Do not expose the line to either small children or pets.
- Do not expose the PICC line to the sun.

When to ring the haematology unit for advice:

- Immediately in any of the following situations:
- If you have a temperature – 38 degrees centigrade or above
- If you feel unwell.
- If the line site is oozing, or appears red or swollen.
- If the line is accidentally snapped or cut.

Contact Numbers

Ward 34 024 7696 5386 or 024 7696 5390

Day Unit 024 7696 5490 or 024 7696 5491

Patient Information

Cancer Information Centre (in the hospital's main entrance)

Open Monday to Friday 9.00am to 4.00pm. Tel 024 7696 6052

Cancer Information Nurse Specialist offers free support, information and practical advice.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7678 6878 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

Document History

Department:	Haematology
Contact:	65546
Updated:	October 2020
Review:	October 2022
Version:	6.1
Reference:	HIC/LFT/536/07