



HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR PICC LINE

What type of care does my PICC line need?

- ❖ After each treatment, the PICC line should be flushed with saline. (Check with the Home Health Agency on the exact amount needed and how often to flush.) To prevent rupture during flushing, only 10ml syringes are to be used and the line should never be forcibly flushed.
- ❖ Check the exit site daily for redness, swelling, pain, bleeding or drainage. If you see any of these problems, call your doctor or nurse right away.
- ❖ Keep the PICC line site clean and dry. Hands must be washed before using or caring for your PICC.

Should someone else learn to care for my PICC line?

- ❖ Yes. You may be too sick to do it yourself. Having someone else who has been trained is important.

What if my dressing gets soiled or wet?

- ❖ The dressing should be changed as soon as possible. This will prevent your PICC from getting infected or falling out. Have the Home Health Nurse or trained family member change the dressing.



Does the PICC always need a dressing?

- ❖ Yes. It keeps the exit site clean and helps keep the line in place.

What if my PICC line develops a leak?

- ❖ If your PICC line gets damaged, call your nurse or doctor right away to have it checked, repaired, and /or replaced as soon as possible.

Will my activities be limited while the PICC line is in place?

- ❖ Your PICC line should not limit your activities. Check with your doctor about activity level. You should avoid swimming or getting into a hot tub unless you have a waterproof picc cover. Also, avoid activities that have constant arm movement (example... weight lifting, vacuuming).

What happens if the PICC is damaged?

- ❖ If you notice the PICC damaged, cut or broken, fold the PICC back on itself and tape it down in place. Call your nurse or doctor right away.
- ❖ Do not use scissors or any sharp object near the PICC line.

What happens if the PICC gets pulled out?

- ❖ If the PICC gets pulled out, apply pressure to the exit site to stop any bleeding and call your nurse or doctor. Save the PICC line so it can be checked. Keeping the dressing in place lessens the chance that the PICC will come out.

What do I do if I run out of supplies?

- ❖ Call the home care nurse or your doctor who is giving you your supplies. Keep extra supplies on hand to avoid running out.

What if I am allergic to the dressing or cleansing agent?

- ❖ If you think you are having an allergic reaction, call your nurse or doctor. They may be able to suggest something that is more appropriate for your needs.

Can my PICC line be used for lab draws?

- ❖ Yes. The PICC line can be used for lab draws or blood tests if it is a 3French or greater in size. Just remember the line must be flushed with saline afterwards to prevent clotting.

Does it hurt when the PICC line is removed?

- ❖ No, you should not feel any pain.



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Size Chart for PICC Cover

PICC Protector	Model #	Bicep Circumference	Forearm Circumference
Small	PC-13	8 - 11 inches	6 - 9 inches
Medium	PC-15	11 - 13 inches	7 - 10 inches
Large	PC-17	12 inches & up	8 inches & up

References

Oxford Textbook of Oncology (2nd edition). Souhami et al. Oxford University Press, 2002.

Cancer and its Management (4th edition). Souhami and Tobias. Oxford Blackwell Scientific Publications, 2003.

The Chemotherapy Source Book (3rd edition). M.C. Perry. Lippencott, Williams and Wilkins, 2001.