

FACTSHEET

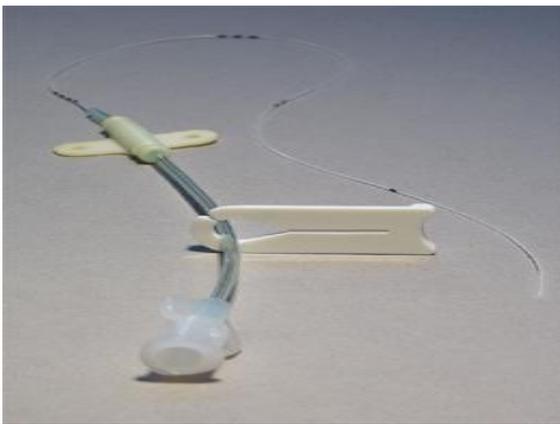


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PICC lines in neonates

What is a PICC line?

PICC stands for “peripherally inserted central catheter”. It is a soft, flexible, intravenous (I.V.) line or straw that is about 20 to 30 cm long. The line is inserted through a vein in the arm or foot and threaded into one of the major blood vessels leading to the heart. It might also be referred to as a “long line”.



Why does my baby need a PICC line?

A PICC line is ideal for babies needing IV access for a long time. Your baby may need a PICC line for giving medications or fluid for nutrition. It reduces the need for lots of needles and cannulas. It can stay in place for many days to weeks.

Will my baby need another IV cannula?

Even with a PICC line in, an IV cannula might be needed for giving blood or medications.

How are PICC lines inserted?

The PICC line is inserted by a trained health care professional using a sterile procedure. A vein is selected – usually in the leg or the arm.

After the PICC line is put in, an x-ray is taken to make sure it is in the right place. The length of time it takes to place the PICC line in babies varies.

Your baby will be given appropriate pain relief during the procedure and receive support to help reduce pain and stress.

The doctor or nurse will talk to you about the procedure before it begins. Please feel free to ask them if you have any questions.



What are the complications?

Though uncommon the complications that can occur are:

- Infection of the PICC line
- The PICC line may leak
- Inflammation of the vein (thrombophlebitis)
- Vascular perforation (very, very rare)
 - Movement of the line either further into or out of the vein
 - Blockage of the line that requires removal and replacement

PICC lines are observed carefully and if any of the above complications are noted, the medical team are immediately notified.

For further information:

Shutter Health CPMC:

[www.cpmc.org/learning/documents/piccline-ped-
ws.html](http://www.cpmc.org/learning/documents/piccline-ped-
ws.html)

About Kids Health:

[www.aboutkidshealth.ca/en/healthaz/testsandtreatm
ents/procedures/pages/peripherally-inserted-central-
catheter-picc.aspx](http://www.aboutkidshealth.ca/en/healthaz/testsandtreatm
ents/procedures/pages/peripherally-inserted-central-
catheter-picc.aspx)