

## WHAT IS A PERIPHERALLY INSERTED CENTRAL CATHETER?

### TRANSCRIPT

A peripherally inserted central catheter, commonly called a PICC line, is a personal medical device designed to make long-term medication treatment easier and more comfortable for you.

A PICC line is a very thin, flexible tube that travels through a small insertion in your upper arm just above your elbow, through a large blood vessel, ending just above your heart. Medication and nutrients are delivered through the tube and can get pumped quickly to the rest of your body, speeding delivery.

The PICC line can also be used to draw blood samples when needed. And because the tube is so small and flexible, it can stay in place for weeks and even months with proper care, reducing the number of times you need to get stuck with a needle, and also making it possible to receive your treatment at home.

A PICC line is made up of several parts. The long, thin tube is called a catheter. It may have one, two or more ports, called lumens, where the medication goes in. The more ports you have, the more medications you can be given at the same time. Each lumen has a special cap, called an injection cap where you will connect medications, cleaning solution, or draw blood.

A clamp on the PICC line can open or close the tube. It must be closed when the tube is not in use, to prevent infection and any leakage. And sterile dressings cover the PICC line where it enters your body, further protecting you from infection.

To insert the PICC line – whether it is single or multi-lumen – a trained member of your healthcare team may use an x-ray or ultrasound machine to guide the catheter through a large vein in your upper arm, and into the large central vein, called the superior vena cava. The insertion area is then covered with sterile dressing.

When your PICC line is first inserted, you may feel some discomfort. Your healthcare provider may recommend you take medications like Advil® or Motrin® for a short time to relieve any pain.

A peripherally inserted central catheter can make long-term care more comfortable. Follow your healthcare provider's directions to make sure your PICC line is kept working well.