

## LOOKING AFTER YOUR PICC LINE

- Strict adherence to hygiene practices when hand washing and handling the catheter must be observed
- No blood pressure or blood samples should be taken above the site of the catheter
- Never use scissors or sharp instruments around the catheter
- If you have any queries or concerns, please discuss with your nurse or doctor

## WHERE CAN I HAVE A PICC LINE INSERTION PROCEDURE?

### HOLLYWOOD PRIVATE HOSPITAL

115 Monash Avenue, Nedlands  
T: 9449 5800 F: 9389 8112

### MT LAWLEY

St John of God Mt Lawley Hospital  
Thirlmere Road, Mt Lawley  
T: 9471 6900 F: 9272 4255

### MURDOCH

St John of God Medical Clinic  
100 Murdoch Drive, Murdoch  
(ent. off Barry Marshall Parade)  
T: 9333 9200 F: 9333 9286

### SUBIACO

St John of God Subiaco Hospital  
12 Salvado Road, Subiaco  
T: 9286 6400 F: 9286 6481

## YOUR GUIDE TO

# PICC LINE INSERTION



## WHAT IS A PICC LINE INSERTION?

Your doctor has requested that you have a Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter (PICC) line inserted. A PICC line is a narrow tube about the width of a piece of spaghetti which enables medical staff to give your medication directly, rather than by repeated injections.

## PATIENT PREPARATION

There is no specific preparation. You will need to bring any x-rays or scans that you have.

Please inform us if you have any allergies or take any medication that thins the blood, such as Warfarin or Plavix, as this may need to be adjusted by your doctor prior to the PICC Line Insertion.

The procedure itself will take approximately 30 minutes. However, with preparation and recovery times, you may be in the Radiology department for up to 2 hours.

You will be asked to change into a gown. You will be given a consent form to read and sign prior to the procedure which outlines what to expect and risks associated with this procedure. A member of staff will explain the procedure in detail. If you have any concerns or queries, please let the staff member looking after you know.

## WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE PROCEDURE?

You may be required to be admitted to hospital for this procedure (Day Surgery Unit).

The PICC line will be inserted into your upper arm. The arm is cleaned with antiseptic and covered with a sterile drape. Ultrasound is used to find a suitable vein. Some local anaesthetic will be injected in the skin before the catheter is inserted. Once the catheter has been inserted into the skin it will be passed along the vein until it reaches the required location. It has been shown that in multiple studies that a PICC line inserted in this manner has the least complications and the greatest longevity.

X-ray contrast material (x-ray dye) may be injected into the catheter and an image taken to confirm that the catheter is correctly positioned. During the injection of x-ray contrast material, you may experience a warm feeling or strange taste in your mouth. Both sensations are temporary and will go away soon.

## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE PROCEDURE?

Management of your PICC line will usually be organised by your referring doctor or by the facility you are attending for treatment.

A small amount of bleeding at the exit site is normal for 24 hours. If after that time you notice blood oozing from the insertion site, inform your nurse or doctor.

You may continue normal activities, avoiding contact sports and heavy lifting.

The PICC line MUST be kept covered and dry. Do not allow the exposed catheter port to get wet. Wrap and seal the PICC line with glad wrap and tape (or large waterproof dressing) before showering. It is not recommended that you bathe, swim or have a spa.

Report immediately to your doctor if you have:

- Increasing pain and discomfort
- A fever
- Bleeding (dressing soaked and does not stop after pressure applied)
- Warmth, redness or swelling of your hand, arm or neck and around the PICC line
- A tear or break in the PICC line or catheter tubing. If leaking, clamp the catheter above the defect with either tape or rubber band
- PICC line has moved or dislodged - ensure the line is always anchored securely