

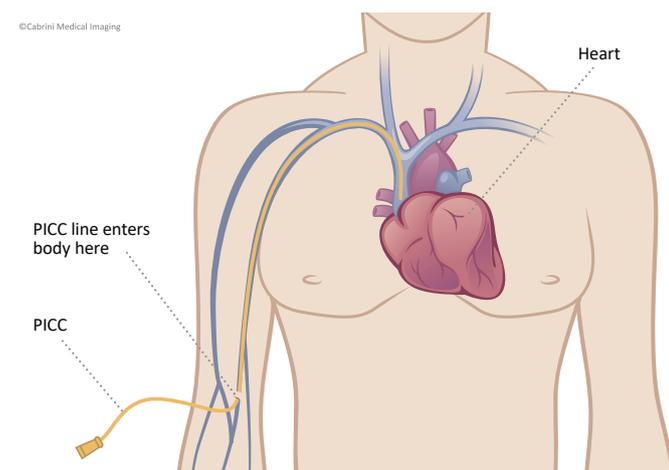
PICC line insertion

What is Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter (PICC Line)?

A PICC line is a long catheter or tube, which is placed into a vein, usually in your arm, and guided along the vein until it sits in one of the major blood vessels near the heart.

A PICC line has the advantage of being able to stay in place for as long as it is needed, unlike a normal intravenous line, which needs to be removed after a few days. This means the PICC line can be used for injections, delivery of chemotherapy and for the taking of blood, without the need to puncture your skin repeatedly.

The procedure is done under strict aseptic technique and under local anaesthetic. It generally takes about 30 minutes, and if done as an outpatient you will be able to go home almost immediately.



Before you come in for the procedure

You will be contacted by the medical imaging department with a date and time for your procedure and you will be asked to go to the admissions department one hour prior to your appointment time, as you will be admitted to the hospital as a 'day case'. This does not mean you will be in the hospital for the whole day.

You will be given instructions by Cabrini Medical Imaging. Please take note of the following and contact the department on the number below if you have any concerns.

- If you are on any blood thinning medication, please make sure you let staff know as soon as possible, as this could affect the ability to do your procedure. Please check with your GP or referring doctor if unsure of your medication.

- On the day of your procedure please bring a list of your current medications (this includes over the counter medications and herbal remedies)
- Please tell the staff if you have a pacemaker, or have had surgery to remove the lymph glands from your underarm
- Please make sure you have someone to drive you home (you are not permitted to drive until the following day)
- Please follow any fasting instructions you have been given

How your PICC line insertion will proceed

From the admissions department, you will be taken to the medical imaging department where you will be prepared for your procedure and taken to the appropriate room.

At this point you have an opportunity to ask one of the nursing staff further questions or to speak to the doctor performing the PICC line insertion. You will then be positioned on the table where the procedure is to take place. You will need to indicate to staff if you have a preference to which arm to have your PICC line. It is important you let the staff know if you have a Pacemaker or a reason why one of your arms cannot be used (e.g. if you have had an axillary clearance).

Once you are lying on the table it is very important that you remain still for the rest of the PICC line insertion.

At this point you will notice that nursing staff are dressing in surgical gowns and wearing masks and hats. Although a PICC line is a very simple procedure it is important that it be inserted under the cleanest of conditions.

Your arm will then be washed with some antiseptic solution and sterile drapes placed over you. A doctor will scan your arm using an ultrasound machine to locate a suitable vein in the inner aspect of your upper arm. A small amount of local anaesthetic will be injected into the area. This may sting for a moment before going numb.

A small needle is then inserted under the skin with the guidance of the ultrasound machine until it is in the vein. The PICC line is inserted through this needle. You may feel some pushing on your arm at this stage.

An x-ray will then be taken to confirm its location. A PICC line can be used immediately after insertion.

Once in the correct position a sterile dressing will be placed over the area. You will then be given some information on how to care for your PICC. It is important to note that your PICC line is not sutured in place and although it does have a locking device attaching it to your skin, it can be easily pulled out if care is not taken.

As with all medical procedures there are associated risks and complications with having this procedure done, they can be broken down into common, rare and very rare.

Common risks and complications

- Discomfort to the area, following the injection. This may be due to the tissues being aggravated by the procedure.
- Bleeding or bruising to the local area

Rare risks and complications

- Infection, which could require additional treatment, possibly antibiotics
- Tip of the PICC may move requiring repositioning
- PICC may become blocked requiring replacement
- The procedure may have to be abandoned due to technical or medical reasons
- Allergy to medications used during this procedure

Very rare risks and complications

- Irregular heart beat due to position of PICC line

How do I get my results?

Digital images are immediately available to your doctor and your records will be kept permanently. This occurs through a system called PACS. **If a priority report is requested it will be issued within two hours and faxed or emailed to your doctor, however this can sometimes take up to 24 hours.**

If your referring doctor wants to see you on the day of your examination, please advise the reception staff when you arrive for your appointment, so the appropriate information can be made available for you to take to your doctor.

Important

It is important to let us know when you make your booking if you are or think you may be pregnant or are breastfeeding.

It is important to bring with you your referral, previous x-rays and any other tests (only if previous ones were **not** done at Cabrini or I-MED).

Questions

For more information or to make an appointment, please contact Cabrini Medical Imaging using the relevant number below.