

**Outpatient Parenteral Antibiotic  
Therapy (OPAT) Clinic**

TTSH Medical Centre, Basement 2

**Contact:**

6357 8275 (OPAT Clinic)

6357 7000 (Central Hotline)

**TTSH Health Library**



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**PICC**



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**Department of  
NURSING**

# Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter (PICC)



## Why Do I Need a Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter (PICC)?

You need long-term access to the veins for the following treatments:

- Antibiotics
- Chemotherapy
- Total Parenteral Nutrition  
(nutrition administered through the veins)

## What is a PICC?

A PICC is a long, thin, soft and flexible tube that is inserted into your body through a large vein, usually in the upper arm.

The PICC may have a single or double lumen, meaning that it can come in single or double tubes, respectively.



Single Lumen



Double Lumen

## How Often Do I Need a Catheter Change?

- Every six months
- When the catheter is blocked or has slipped out of position

## Where in the Hospital Do I Go To for Catheter Insertion?

The catheter will be inserted at the Radiology Department. It takes about half an hour or less to complete the insertion.

## How is the PICC Inserted?

To reduce the pain of inserting the PICC, you will be given a painkiller injection before insertion.

Our healthcare professional will use ultrasound to first locate the vein in your upper arm before inserting the PICC. After the insertion, an X-ray will be done to confirm the location of the tip of the catheter.

## What Else Do I Need to Know About the PICC?

After inserting the PICC, it will be secured by a securement device (refer to Fig 1). A dressing will be placed over the PICC and the securement device (refer to Fig 2). The end of the PICC is closed with a connector. The securement device, dressing and connector have to be changed every **seven days** or when needed.



Fig 1

Securement device

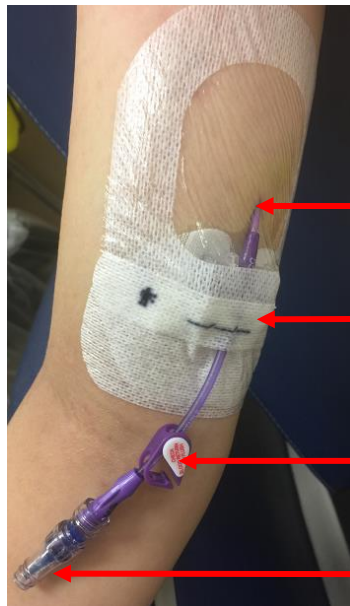


Fig 2

Insertion point of PICC

Dressing over the  
securement device

Clamp  
(Keep open at all times)

Connector to PICC

## What Can I Expect After Inserting the PICC?

Some bleeding, like staining on the dressing, may be expected over the insertion site. You may also feel some pain or discomfort after the insertion. Do take the oral medication for pain prescribed by your doctor.

## Notify the Nurse Immediately If You Notice Any of the Following:

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Wet or loose dressing
- Fever exceeding  $>38^{\circ}\text{C}$
- Yellow discharge or foul smell at the insertion site
- Swelling and pain in the upper arm or shoulder
- Breakage or dislodgment of the tubes in any way

## How is the PICC Removed?

A trained nurse or doctor will remove the catheter for you after you complete your treatment.

## How to Care for My PICC Line?

### Do's

- Wash your hands before touching your PICC
- Keep your PICC dressing dry at all times
- Cover the dressing with a waterproof material and seal the edges before showering
- Inform the nurse if you suspect that the PICC has shifted

### Don'ts

- Lift heavy items or perform strenuous activities (e.g. swimming, playing tennis) that will strain the affected arm or cause the PICC to dislodge
- Submerge the PICC line in water, such as bathtub or swimming pool
- Pull on the catheter
- Scratch at or around the insertion site

## Do I Need to Stay in the Hospital Until the PICC is Removed?

Not necessarily, as you can take care of the PICC at home. However, you will be scheduled an appointment for follow-up at one of the clinics listed below, depending on your condition type:

- Outpatient Parenteral Antibiotic Therapy (OPAT) Clinic
- Clinic 4B
- Clinic 5A

## Why Do I Need to Visit The Clinic?

- To receive your medication as prescribed by the doctor
- For blood test to determine the effectiveness and progress of the treatment
- For weekly change of the PICC securement device, dressing and connector

## You May Contact Nurses at Outpatient Parenteral Antibiotic Therapy (OPAT):

During office hours on weekdays 0800 – 1700 hours	6357 8275
After office hours/ weekends/ public holidays 0800 – 1200 hours	9722 6243 OR visit the Emergency Department