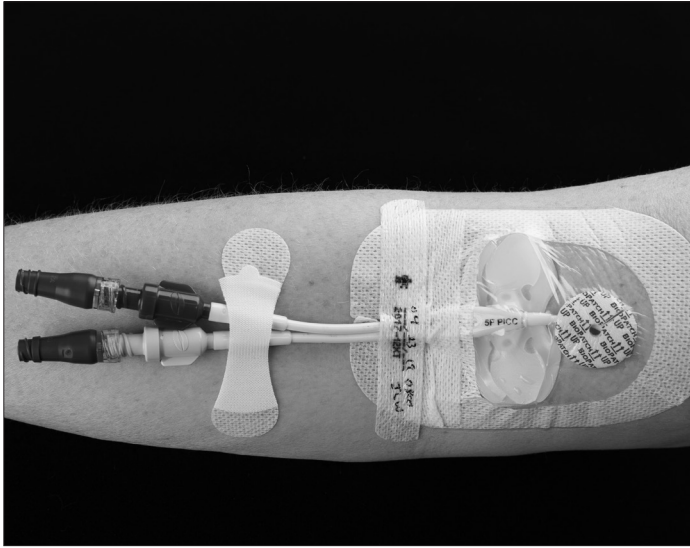


# Caring for Your Child's PICC



## What is a PICC?

A PICC (Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter) is a thin, flexible catheter (tube). The PICC enters a vein in the upper arm and stops in a large vein near the heart. The other end of the PICC lies outside the skin on the upper arm.

You use the PICC to deliver an infusion (medicine or a fluid mixture) directly into the vein. Your PHS IV nurse may also use the PICC to collect blood samples.

This guide tells you how to do the following:

- Care for your child's PICC
- Prevent infections related to a PICC
- Check your child for problems with the PICC

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## Supplies



**Emergency Kit**  
[Supplied by Pharmacy]



**Pronet Mesh or Wraps**  
[Supplied by Pharmacy]

## Using the Emergency Kit

**Take an Emergency Kit with you everywhere you take your child.**

The emergency kit includes the following items:

- Bandage change supplies
- Pre-filled saline flush syringes
- Pre-filled heparin flush syringes
- Needleless connector
- Chlorhexidine pads
- Padded clamp\*

\*For information on using the padded clamp, read the "Clamping a Leaking PICC" section of this guide.



Do **NOT** use supplies in the emergency kit for routine care. Immediately replace any supply you or a nurse use so the kit is always ready for emergencies. Contact the PHS pharmacy to order replacement supplies for the kit.

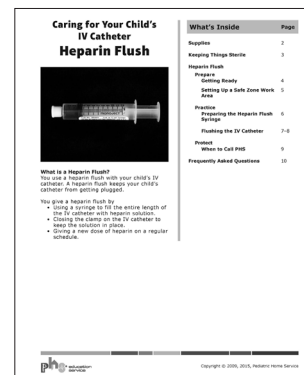
**NOTE!** A PHS IV nurse must train you on safe use of supplies in the emergency kit. If you have an emergency before you receive the specific training to respond, contact a PHS IV nurse. The nurse will do one of the following:

- Meet you to provide care to your child
- Talk you through the safe use of the emergency supplies over the phone

## Flushing the PICC

You flush (push fluid into) the PICC before and after you give an infusion. Flushing the PICC prevents blood from becoming solid and blocking the catheter.

This guide does not explain how to flush a PICC. Your PHS IV nurse gives you a separate guide about safely using the PICC to give an infusion.



## Checking Your Child and the PICC

**WARNING!** The PICC goes directly into your child's blood stream. You can make your child very sick or threaten your child's life if you use the PICC incorrectly. Every caregiver must have training from a PHS IV nurse before using or caring for the PICC.

You must check your child and the PICC **at least one time each day**. Your child may become very sick if you do not notice and report problems right away.

### Checking Your Child

#### What To Do

Call your PHS IV nurse or child's doctor right away if your child has any of the following:

- Temperature greater than 100.5 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celcius)
- Chills or shivering
- Sudden upset stomach
- Vomiting
- Dizziness
- Sickness after IV flushing
- Rash, itching, or hives on the skin
- Swelling of the hand, arm, chest, shoulder, or neck on the side where the PICC is located

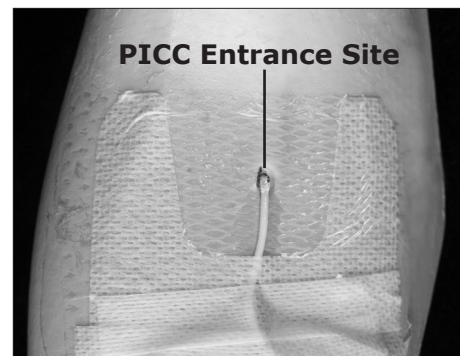


### Checking the PICC

#### What To Do

**Check the PICC entrance site each day.** Call your PHS IV nurse or child's doctor if your child has any of the following:

- Redness, swelling, tenderness, or odor
- Pain or discomfort
- Warmth in the skin
- Bleeding spot in an amount larger than a pea
- Drainage or pus
- Increased length of PICC outside of skin



## Checking the PICC Bandage

### IMPORTANT!

- The bandage covering the PICC keeps germs from getting into your child's bloodstream. Germs can make your child very sick or threaten your child's life.
- Your PHS IV nurse changes the PICC bandage. The nurse knows how to keep germs away from the PICC site while changing the bandage. Do **NOT** change the bandage yourself until the nurse shows you how to safely do it.
- Contact your PHS IV nurse if you see any problems with your child's PICC bandage.

There may be a small amount of bleeding where the PICC enters your child's arm. This slight bleeding can last for one or two days after the PICC is placed in the vein.

Your PHS IV nurse checks the PICC bandage one to two days after your child receives the PICC. The nurse changes the bandage every week, or more often if the bandage is dirty or loose. Only the PHS IV nurse or a trained caregiver should change the PICC bandage.

### What To Do

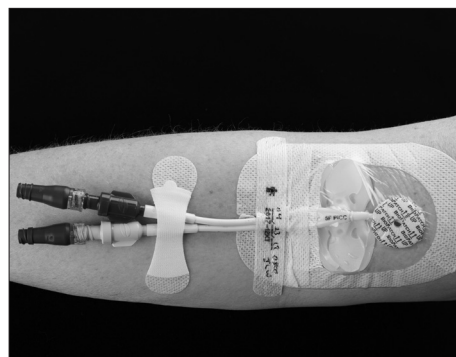
**Check the PICC bandage at least one time every day.**

- Contact your PHS IV nurse if the bandage is not
  - Clean
  - Dry
  - Tightly sealed around edges
- Cover the PICC bandage with a mesh sleeve (Pronet) or other wrapping.
- Keep the PICC bandage dry during a shower or bath. Cover the bandage with plastic wrap (such as a plastic bag, Saran Wrap, or Glad Press-N-Seal). Tape the edges of the plastic wrap to the skin with medical tape.
- Use medical tape to seal the edges of the bandage if they start to lift away from the skin. Contact your PHS IV nurse to change the bandage if you cannot seal the edges with tape.
- Contact your PHS IV nurse if you notice a rash or redness under the bandage.



### WHAT NOT TO DO

- **NEVER** use scissors or other sharp objects near your child's PICC.
- **NEVER** remove your child's PICC bandage unless a PHS IV nurse shows you how to safely do it.
- **NEVER** allow visiting family members or friends to touch your child's PICC. Every caregiver must have training from a PHS IV nurse before using or caring for your child's PICC.



Example of PICC Bandage



Example of Pronet Mesh Sleeve



Example of Taping Bandage Edges

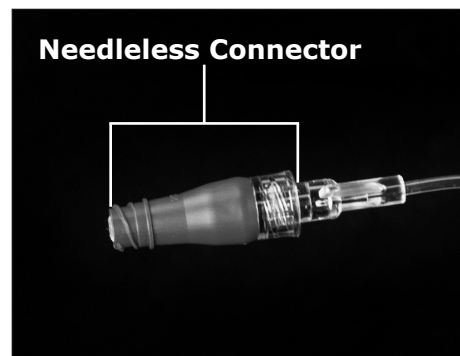
## Checking the Needleless Connector

### IMPORTANT!

- Your child's PICC must always have a needleless connector attached to the end of the catheter.
- The needleless connector keeps germs out of the blood stream. It also keeps blood from leaking out of the PICC.
- You must change the needleless connector every week and any time it gets dirty.
- Your PHS IV nurse teaches you how to change the needleless connector. Read the *Caring for Your Child's IV Catheter: Needleless Connector Change* guide from your PHS IV nurse.

### What To Do

- **Check the needleless connector for problems at least one time each day.** Make sure the needleless connector is
  - Tightly attached to the end of the PICC
  - Not dirty or damaged
- Change the needleless connector every week, three to four days after your PHS IV nurse changes it, OR if it
  - Is dirty or damaged
  - Comes off of PICC
- Never change the needleless connector before you receive training from the PHS IV nurse.
- Contact your PHS IV nurse if the needleless connector needs changing before you receive training.



### WHAT NOT TO DO

- **NEVER** leave the end of the PICC open without a needleless connector.
- **NEVER** change the needleless connector before the PHS IV nurse trains you.
- Do **NOT** allow your child to suck or chew on the needleless connector.
- Do **NOT** allow the needleless connector to drop into bathwater.
- Do **NOT** allow the needleless connector to drop inside your child's diaper.



**We have a how-to video for that!**

To watch a video about Changing a Needleless Connector, go to **PHSTips.com**

**NOTE!** Some PICCs have separate lumens (tubes) inside the catheter. These lumens emerge separately from the end of the PICC that hangs outside the arm.

- PICCs with two tubes are called double lumen PICCs. PICCs with three tubes are called triple lumen PICCs.
- Always keep a needleless connector attached to the end of each lumen.
- Contact your PHS IV nurse if you have questions about the type of PICC your child has.



## Protecting the PICC

**IMPORTANT!** Your child can move around normally with a PICC. However, you must protect the PICC from damage, water, and being pulled out of the vein. It only takes a moment for

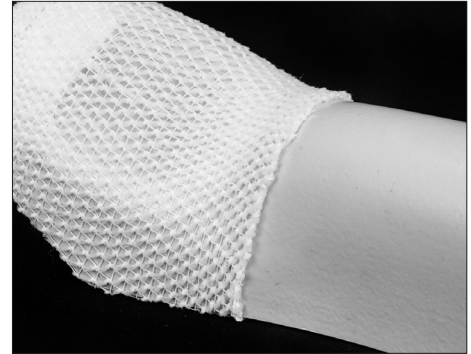
- A child to pull out a PICC
- The PICC to catch on something and come out of the vein

### What To Do

Always keep the PICC and needleless connector tight against your child's arm.

- Tape the PICC to your child's skin with medical tape  
OR
- Use Pronet or another mesh sleeve to hold the PICC close to the arm  
OR
- Wrap the arm if your child wants to "play" with the PICC. Your PHS IV nurse can help you select a good wrap to use.

Call your PHS IV nurse or child's doctor if you see increased length of PICC outside of the skin.



**Example of PICC Bandage with Pronet Mesh Sleeve**

***You must remove the mesh sleeve or wrapping at least one time each day to check the PICC.*** Read the "Checking Your Child and the PICC" and "Checking the PICC Bandage" sections in this guide.

**NOTE!** Your child should not swim in lakes, rivers, or oceans with a PICC. Check with your child's doctor about whether it is safe to swim in a pool.



### WHAT NOT TO DO

- **NEVER** allow the PICC to dangle freely from your child's arm. A dangling PICC easily catches on anything as your child moves in bed, walks, runs, or plays.

### IMPORTANT!

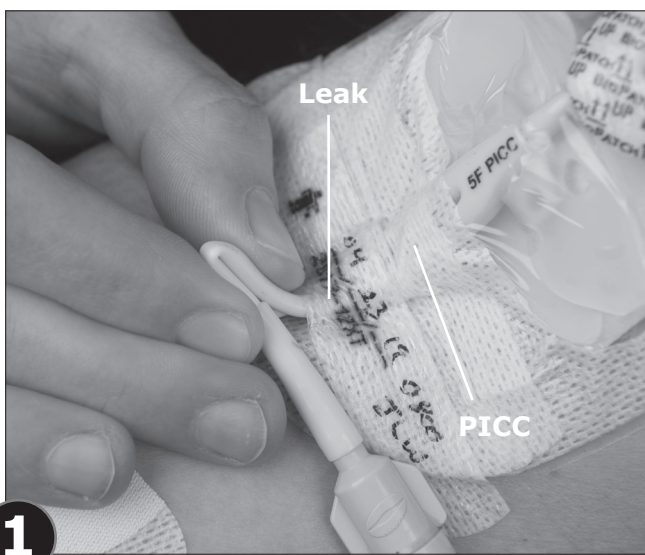
- If the PICC starts to come out of the arm
  - Tape the PICC to your child's skin with medical tape.
  - Call your PHS IV nurse right away.
- If the PICC comes completely out of the arm
  - Apply pressure over the PICC entrance site with a gauze pad, cotton ball, or tissue.
  - Call your PHS IV nurse or child's doctor right away.

## Clamping a Leaking PICC

### **WARNING!** A leaking PICC

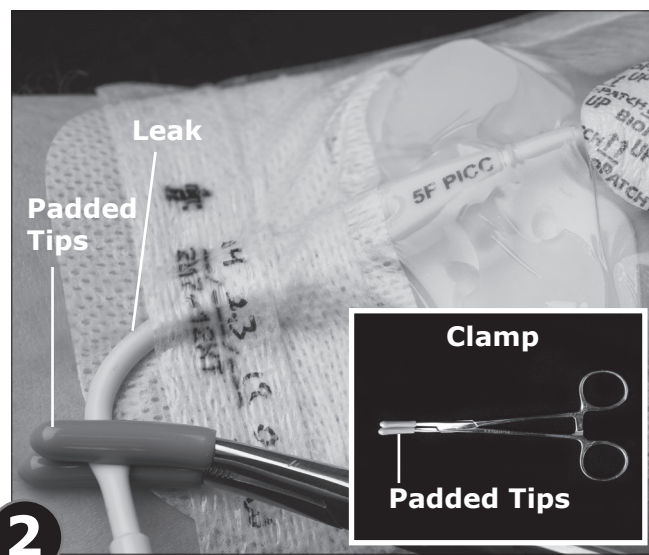
- Allows blood to leak out of the PICC
- Allows germs to enter your child's bloodstream

A leaking PICC can make your child very sick or threaten your child's life. **Use the padded clamp to immediately close off a leaking PICC.** If you are unsure how to close off a leaking PICC, take your child to the emergency room.



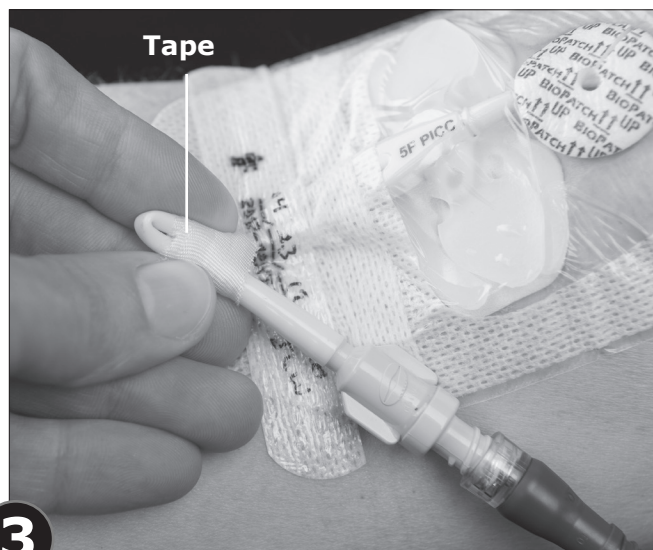
Close off the PICC by folding and pinching the catheter between the leak and your child's arm.

Keep the PICC pinched as you or someone else takes the padded clamp from the Emergency Kit.



Use the padded tips on the clamp to close off the catheter between the leak and your child's arm.

**NOTE!** To open the clamp, slightly move one finger hole up and the other down.



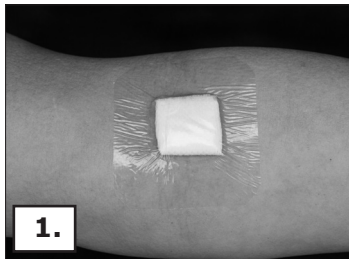
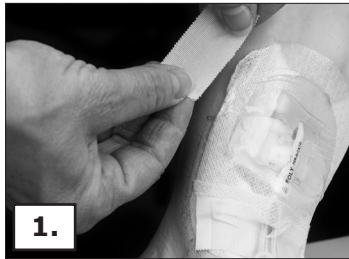



If you cannot locate the padded clamp, keep the folded catheter tightly closed with a rubber band or tape.



After closing off your child's leaking PICC, call a PHS IV nurse right away for further instructions.



## Troubleshooting

Problem	Action to Take	
Fluid is leaking from the PICC.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tighten the needleless connector.</li> <li>2. Check for a leak in the PICC. If you see a leak, close off catheter with padded clamp, or fold catheter and pinch closed with tape or rubber band.</li> <li>3. Call your PHS IV nurse or child's doctor right away.</li> </ol>	
You see more of the PICC outside of the arm than previously.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do NOT try to push PICC back into your child's vein.</li> <li>2. Tape the PICC to your child's skin with medical tape.</li> <li>3. Call your PHS IV nurse right away.</li> </ol>	
PICC is completely out of the arm.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Apply pressure to the PICC entrance site with gauze, cotton ball, or tissue until the bleeding stops. Apply an adhesive bandage.</li> <li>2. Call your PHS IV nurse or child's doctor right away.</li> </ol>	
Bandage is lifting away from skin.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use medical tape to seal down bandage edges.</li> <li>2. If you cannot seal the edges with tape, call PHS IV nurse to change bandage. Do NOT change bandage unless PHS nurse shows you how to safely do it.</li> </ol>	
Blood is visible in the catheter.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tighten the needleless connector.</li> <li>2. Flush the PICC if a PHS IV nurse already trained you.</li> <li>3. Call your PHS IV nurse if you continue to see blood in catheter.</li> </ol>	

Continued on next page →



## Troubleshooting [continued]

Problem	Action to Take	
<p>Child has one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forehead hot to touch</li> <li>• Chills or shivering</li> <li>• Sudden upset stomach or vomiting</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Difficulty breathing</li> <li>• Pain in chest</li> <li>• Bleeding, drainage, pus, pain, redness, or swelling at the PICC entrance site</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take your child's temperature.</li> <li>2. Call your PHS IV nurse or child's doctor right away.</li> </ol>	
<p>Swelling, redness, or pain in upper arm or in neck or face area.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Call your PHS IV nurse or child's doctor right away.</li> </ol>	

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How long does a PICC last?

A PICC can last many months if there is no infection, blockage, or leak in the catheter. Usually the PICC lasts the length of your child's infusion therapy.

### How do you remove my child's PICC?

Your PHS IV nurse or a clinic nurse removes the PICC. There is usually very little bleeding and no pain when pulling out a PICC. The nurse puts a bandage over the PICC entrance site. Leave the bandage on and keep it dry for 24 to 48 hours. Call your PHS IV nurse right away if you notice drainage, bleeding, redness, pain, swelling, or heat at the site.

### Why do I have to keep a needleless connector on the end of my child's PICC?

The needleless connector keeps germs out of the blood stream. It also keeps blood from leaking out of the PICC. Your child's PICC must ALWAYS have a needleless connector attached to its end.

### Can my child do normal activities with a PICC?

Your child can move around normally if the PICC is covered and kept close to the arm. Use medical tape, a mesh sleeve, or a wrapping to keep the PICC from catching on anything.

Your child should not swim in lakes, rivers, or oceans with a PICC. Ask your child's doctor if it is safe for your child to swim in a pool.