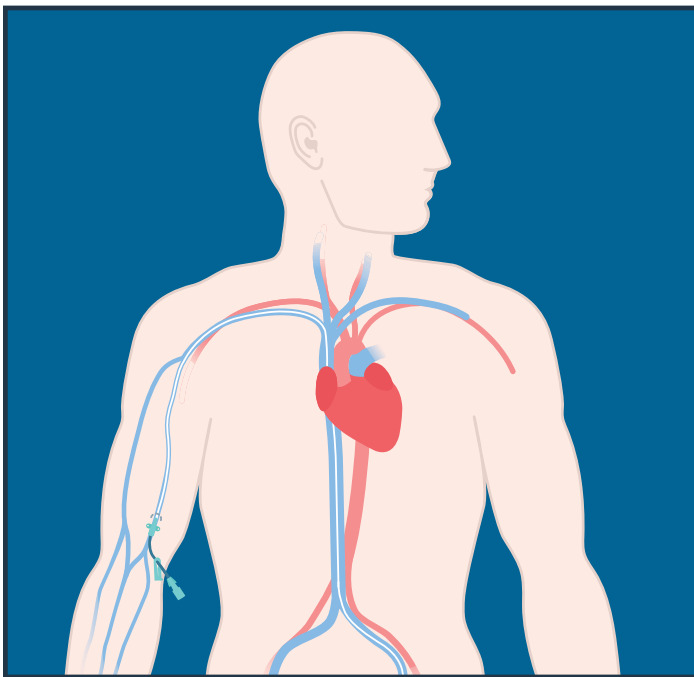


PICC LINE

A PICC line (peripherally inserted central catheter) is a soft tube that is placed into a vein in the arm. A needle is used to put the PICC line into the vein, and the catheter (or line) is threaded through the needle, up through the arm to end in a large vein in the chest near the heart. The needle is then removed. You will not need surgery to get a PICC line. After it is in place, there may be one or more “tails” (catheters or lines sticking out of the skin) on the PICC. It can be left in for many weeks to months.

Some brand names of PICC lines are Per-Q-Cath and Groshong PICC.

CARING FOR AN PICC LINE



Once the port is inserted and the incision heals, the skin around it does not require any special care. You can bathe, shower, or even swim. Your cancer care team will tell you when it is OK to do these things.

When a port is used for treatment or to draw blood, a special needle (called a *non-coring needle*) is used to access the port through the skin. This will hurt a little since it is a needle going through your skin.

When it is not being used, you will likely need to have the port flushed. The frequency of these flushes will be determined by your physician. This involves using the special non-coring needle to access the port and flushing some fluid through it. This regular flushing is sometimes called maintenance flushing. It is done so the port and catheter inside stay open and clear in case you need to use it again.