

Patient consent for insertion of a peripherally inserted central catheter (PICC)

This leaflet tells you the benefits, risks and alternatives of having a PICC line inserted so that you can make a fully informed decision when asked to consent to the procedure.

Key points

- A doctor/health care professional responsible for your care has requested the placement of a PICC. A vascular access specialist nurse will perform this procedure, either at your bedside in hospital or, if you are an outpatient, in the Radiology (X-ray) Department.
- The catheter is placed in a vein in your upper arm using ultrasound.
- The PICC will extend from your upper arm vein around to the large vessel in your chest called the superior vena cava; this is the ideal place for your body to receive the medication that you need as part of your treatment.
- The vascular access nurse will use magnetic imaging to view and track the direction of the catheter during insertion and ECG (electrocardiogram – heart monitoring) technology to confirm final placement.
- A chest X-ray maybe required if an accurate heart rhythm could not be analysed during insertion.

What are the benefits of having a PICC?

- Successful placement avoids repeat venepuncture to maintain intravenous (IV) access and deliver prescribed therapy (medication).
- Placement of the PICC should not interfere with activities of daily living (though no swimming).
- Prevents complications associated with peripheral IVs (cannulas), such as vein inflammation.
- Blood samples can be taken from the PICC, preventing further needle use.

What are the risks of having a PICC?

- Infection or phlebitis – pain, redness or fever.
- Bleeding or clotting of the vein (thrombosis) – arm swelling, pain and redness.
- Inability to insert catheter due to size, condition or anatomy of vein.
- Inadvertent arterial puncture of an artery.
- Nerve damage (temporary).

What are the alternatives to having a PICC?

- Smaller peripheral device, e.g. cannula in your lower arm, dependant on your treatment.
- Central venous access device inserted by a doctor using fluoroscopy (X-ray) guidance.
- Refusal of intravenous (IV) treatment.

Consent for insertion of a peripherally inserted central catheter (PICC)

Patient agreement signature: _____ Date: _____

Patient name: _____ Date: _____

Vascular access professional: _____ Date: _____

Witness name: _____ Date: _____

Relation to patient: _____

Patient signature of refusal: _____ Date: _____

Staff note: document further in EPR if consent refused.

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Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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