



## Phone Numbers

Days

**403-521-3735**

**Toll Free 1-866-238-3735**

Chemotherapy Symptoms

(Medical Daycare)

8:00 am - 4:00 pm



Evenings, Weekends & Holidays

Urgent Issues Only

Call Foothills Hospital at  
403-944-1110 and ask for the  
Cancer Doctor on call



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### For more information contact:

Tom Baker Cancer Centre

1331 29 St NW

Calgary, AB

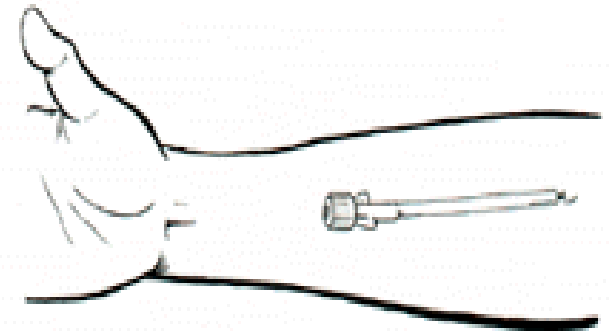
403-521-3723 (Switchboard)

1-844-465-6330 (Switchboard)

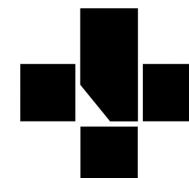
Treatment | Systemic Therapy | Your PICC | TBCC | 2016 | B0083

## Your PICC (Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter)

Treatment—Systemic Therapy



Tom Baker  
Cancer Centre



**Alberta Health  
Services**

## What is a peripherally inserted central catheter (PICC)?

## Notes

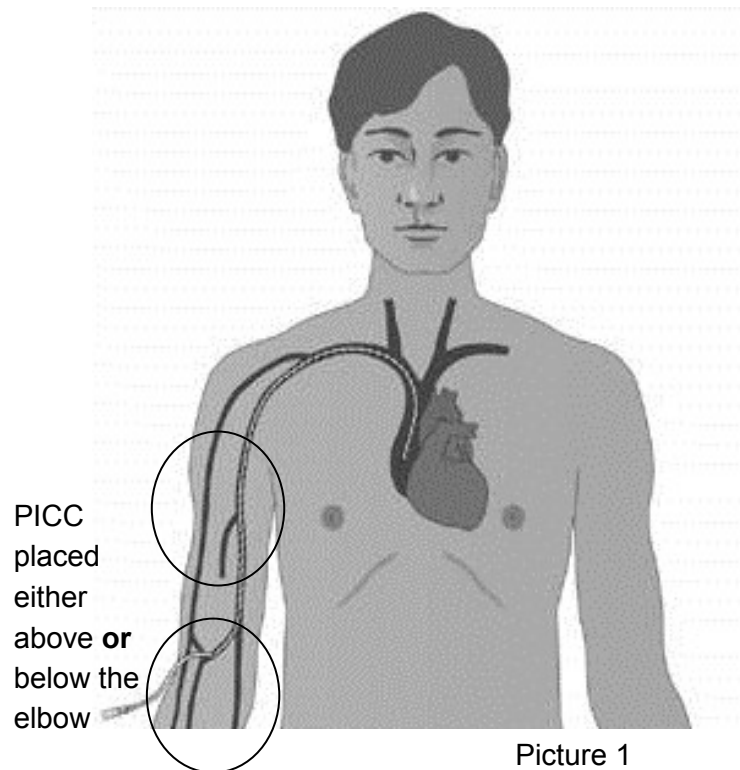
A PICC is a long tube that is placed into your arm vein (picture 1). It's then slid through the vein until the tip is just above your heart.

A PICC can remain in your vein for many months.

It's used to give:

- Chemotherapy
- Medication
- Blood transfusions and other fluids

The PICC makes it possible for you to have many treatments without having to put a needle into your vein each time.



Picture 1

- 3. PICC moved out of place** - If the length of the PICC seems longer than normal, **call the Chemotherapy Symptoms line immediately.**

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### When should I go to the Emergency Room?

1. If you feel:
  - Pain in your chest
  - Shortness of breath
  - A cough that won't go away
  - Confusion
  - Dizzy
2. If you have:
  - Sudden pain in your jaw, ear or neck
  - Difficulty swallowing or turning your head
  - Swelling in your chest or neck
  - Distended neck veins
3. If you notice a break in the line, bend the PICC so that it is kinked and tape it securely to your arm.
4. If the PICC pulls out all of the way, put pressure on the site for at least 10 minutes and until bleeding stops. Call the Chemotherapy Symptoms line right away or go to the nearest emergency department.

**If you go to emergency and get any treatment, call the Chemotherapy Symptoms line to let them know.**

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### What can I do to prepare for my PICC?

**Do not** eat or drink for 2 hours before having the PICC inserted.

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### How will my PICC be placed?

Your PICC will be placed by our PICC Services team. You will sign a consent form before the procedure.

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### Dressing Changes

The dressing will cover the area where the PICC enters your skin.

The dressing:

- Keeps the area clean and dry
- Prevents infection
- Keeps the PICC in place

Your dressing needs to be changed by a nurse 24 hours after the procedure. A nurse will also change the dressing every 7 days or when it becomes wet or loose.

**Do not take the dressing off yourself.**

## What do I need to know about my PICC?

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### Water and my PICC:

You may shower with your PICC in place. Never put your PICC in water. Protect it from the water by putting plastic around your arm such as Saran Wrap®. If you choose to take a bath, make sure the water is low enough so your PICC does not touch the water. Do not go into hot tubs, or go swimming in pools or lakes.

### On your PICC arm:

- Do not put on any pressure
- Do not wear tight clothing
- Do not have your blood pressure checked
- Do not have blood work taken

### Activity:

- Keep active but avoid activity where you need to repeat the action over and over again. For example, do not vacuum or shovel.
- Stay away from heavy lifting (5 pounds or more). For example, lifting your groceries or even the laundry could be too much.
- Also, avoid strenuous exercises while you have a PICC.

## What should I watch for?

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### Do not remove your dressing.

Check your arm daily for:

#### 1. **Signs of infection** - Check the site for:

- Redness
- Warmth
- Swelling
- Coloured or foul smelling drainage.

If you have any of these symptoms call the Chemotherapy Symptoms line right away.

If you have these symptoms and your temperature is greater than 38.3 °C (100.9 °F) the first time you take it or you have two temperature readings of 38.0°C (100.4°F) taken one hour apart, **go to your nearest Emergency department immediately and present the letter from your chemotherapy package.**

#### 2. **Blood clot** - Check for pain or swelling at the PICC site. If you see or feel any of the following:

- Redness at the insertion site
- A red streak coming up your arm
- Your arm is hard and warm to touch
- You feel numbness or tingling in your fingers

**Call the Chemotherapy Symptoms line immediately.**