

PICC (peripherally inserted central catheter)

A PICC is a type of central venous (large vein) access device. By using it, you can get medicines or fluids or have blood taken without having a needle stick in your vein each time. It is used when:

- the veins in your arm are small or hard
- you must have an IV often
- you must have an IV for a long period of time

A **PICC** is a small catheter (tube) that is put into a large vein in the arm. A needle is used to place the catheter into the vein. A pinch or prick will be felt when it is put in. The catheter is then gently guided through the arm vein until it reaches a larger vein near the heart.

One end of the catheter stays outside the body. Blood samples can be taken, and IV medicines or fluids given, through an injection cap or valve on the end of the catheter which is called the **hub**.

The catheter will be taped to the arm and covered by a dressing. This is to keep germs out.

The PICC needs special care to keep the site clean, avoid infection and make sure it does not get blocked. The nurse will show you how to care for it.

