A peripherally inserted central catheter, or PICC [pı̇k], is a catheter (long, flexible tube) inserted through a small vein and threaded into a larger vein. When the tube goes into a larger vein near the heart, it’s called a central line.

Why does my baby need a PICC?
Your baby may need a PICC if:

• They’ll need fluids, nutrition, or medicine through an IV (tiny tube into a vein) for several weeks.
• They need certain fluids and medicines that can only be given through a PICC line or central line.

A PICC means your baby may not need a new IV each time they need treatment.

How is a PICC inserted?
To insert a PICC, a healthcare provider:

• May give your baby medicine to help them relax.
• Washes their hands well and wears a mask, cap, sterile gown, and sterile gloves to prevent infection.
• Cleans your baby’s skin with an antiseptic (solution that prevents infection) and covers the insertion site with sterile cloths.
• Uses a small needle to insert the PICC through your baby’s skin, into a vein, and up into the larger vein.

A healthcare provider takes an x-ray to make sure the PICC is in the right place and covers the PICC insertion site with a sterile bandage. It’s normal to see a little blood here at first. Inserting the PICC usually takes 1 to 2 hours.

How will hospital staff care for my baby’s PICC?
To care for your baby’s PICC, healthcare providers will:

• Carefully hold or move your baby to prevent pulling on the PICC.
• Change the cap on the end of the PICC each week and clean the catheter opening with an antiseptic solution. Note: Only a doctor or nurse should change or open the cap on the end of the catheter.
• Wash their hands well and wear gloves and a mask when drawing blood from the PICC, giving medicine through a PICC, or changing the bandage that covers the insertion site (only if loose or soiled).
• Carefully handle medicines and fluids given through the PICC.
## Talking with your baby’s doctor about a PICC

The table below lists the potential benefits, risks, and alternatives for a PICC. Talk to your child’s doctor about this process, and ask questions before scheduling the procedure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible benefits</th>
<th>Risks and possible complications</th>
<th>Alternatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A PICC can:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Stay in place for days or weeks, as needed, to provide IV treatments</td>
<td>• Infection</td>
<td>PICC alternatives depend on your baby’s needs and may include regular IVs or a central catheter (which must be inserted in an operating room).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cause less irritation and damage to the veins than multiple IVs and IV medicines would</td>
<td>• Needing to insert the PICC again if the PICC end can’t be positioned in the right place inside a vein</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Allow your baby to have a higher concentration of nutrients and medicine</td>
<td>• PICC moving outside the right position inside the vein</td>
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<td>• PICC breaking inside the vein</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fluid leaking outside the vein</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bleeding, irritation, and blood clot</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Questions for my baby’s doctor

- What are the potential benefits of a PICC?
- What are the risks and possible complications of a PICC?
- What alternatives are available for a PICC?