

Important Points

PICC lines can become infected. Signs and symptoms of infection include:

- pain around the exit site
- discharge or leakage from the site
- redness around the exit site
- shivering within 2 hours of PICC line being used or flushed.

Contact your healthcare provider, or if out of hours, contact NHS24.

Rarely PICC lines can break or leak. Should you notice any damage or leakage from your line, contact your healthcare provider or out of hours contact NHS24.

If you accidentally dislodge the line, press on the exit site firmly with a clean swab for a few minutes and contact the hospital Emergency Department for further advice. Keep the line so staff can check it is complete.

It is also important that the dressing on your PICC line remains intact. Once a week, the PICC line site will be redressed and flushed, either by your healthcare professional or your community nurse.

It is essential to keep the area around the line clean and dry at all times. When taking a shower it helps to wrap the area with 'cling film' to keep the area watertight.

While you have a PICC line in, it is vital that anyone who comes into contact with it uses strict aseptic technique. This means using sterile gloves and sterile packs.

You can lead a normal life with a PICC line in place, but there are some things that should be avoided. Swimming is not possible and heavy work or certain sports may not be possible, as the line could become dislodged. Contact your healthcare professional for further advice.

Further information and help

For further information about any aspect of your care, please contact:

- Your medical practice.
- NHS24 Freephone: 111
web: www.nhs24.scot

We are listening - how did we do?

We welcome your feedback, as it helps us evaluate the services we provide. If you would like to tell us about your experience:

- speak to a member of staff
- visit our website feedback section at:
www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk or share your story at:
www.careopinion.org.uk or 0800 122 31 35
- tel. 01851 708069 or 07814 071868 Monday-Friday between 9am-5.30pm.

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Disclaimer

The content of this leaflet is intended to augment, not replace, information provided by your clinician. It is not intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Reading this information does not create or replace a doctor-patient relationship or consultation. If required, please contact your doctor or other health care provider to assist you to interpret any of this information, or in applying the information to your individual needs.

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NHS Western Isles

Outpatient Antibiotic Therapy (OPAT)



Patient information leaflet

What is OPAT?

OPAT (Outpatient Antibiotic Therapy) is a service offered to enable you to be treated at home.

This method of treatment is as complete and effective as the treatment you receive in hospital.

Intravenous antibiotics can be delivered safely in the community by either:

- having it administered at the hospital as an outpatient
- having it administered at your local practice
- having it administered by the community nurses
- administration by yourself/family member (full training and an assessment will be provided).

A full assessment will be carried out by your healthcare provider to decide which delivery method is right for you.

What are the advantages of OPAT?

- You are able to remain at or return home.
- A reduced risk of health care associated infections.
- You may return to work/school, this will be discussed with you.

How often will my intravenous antibiotics be given?

Your healthcare provider will discuss the planned treatment regime with you. This may include intravenous antibiotics and oral antibiotics.

Follow up while receiving treatment

You will be reviewed by your healthcare provider or your own practice clinical staff to ensure your treatment continues to be effective.

Information for patients with CVC Catheters (PICC LINES) insitu

A PICC line is a long thin flexible tube, known as a catheter. It is inserted into one of the veins near the bend of the elbow, it is then slid into the vein until the tip sits in a large vein just above the heart.

It can stay in for weeks or months depending on how long the treatment course is.

The line can be used to give you your intravenous antibiotics, as well as taking some blood samples.

Possible problems

Most complications are rare, but it is important to contact the hospital if you are concerned.

Sometimes during the first 72 hours your arm can ache, after having a PICC line inserted. Try placing a warm compress above the insertion site to help ease this. Simple analgesia (painkillers) may also help.

Inflammation of the vein

It is normally evident within 10 days of insertion. Symptoms will be present around the bicep area above the PICC insertion site.

As the PICC travels within the veins towards the heart, the veins become larger therefore accommodating the PICC without irritating the vein wall. This usually settles and does not always mean the PICC will have to be removed. Symptoms include swelling, pain, palpable vein tracking up the arm.

Please discuss with your healthcare provider if you notice any of these symptoms:

- swollen or mottled arm
- swelling around the arm or neck.

Contact your healthcare provider or hospital for advice if you are at all worried about possible problems or inflammation.