PICC Line Access – 30.170

DEFINITION:

A Peripherally Inserted Central Line (PICC) is a common method of maintaining long-term venous access in select patients. PICC lines are typically inserted into the actecubital fossa, and then threaded into central circulation. PICC lines are flushed with heparin to maintain patency and therefore it is imperative to aspirate 5 ml of blood from the line prior to use.

INDICATIONS:

A. PICC lines may be accessed when there is a need for drug or fluid administration and traditional means of venous access are unsuccessful.
B. Patient or patient's caregiver requests use of PICC line.

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

A. Inability to aspirate or infuse through the catheter.
B. Catheter located in any place other than the patient's upper arm.
C. Need for rapid fluid resuscitation.

PROCEDURE:

A. Use clean gloves and maintain sterility as much as possible.
B. If there is a needleless type port on the distal end of the catheter, perform the following: *(figure 1)*
    1. Scrub the port with an alcohol pad for at least 15 seconds and allow to dry for at least 5 seconds.
    2. Attach a 10 ml syringe (without saline) to the port.
    3. Unclamp if necessary (needless port may not have a clamp)
    4. Attempt to aspirate at least 5 ml of blood. Blood should draw freely. If it does not, remove the syringe and DO NOT use the catheter for access.
    5. If blood aspirates freely, remove the 10 ml syringe with blood and discard.
    6. Attach a 10 ml syringe with LR or NS and gently flush the line. Never use a smaller syringe. If line does not flush, remove the syringe and DO NOT use the catheter for access.
    7. If line flushes, remove the syringe and attach the catheter to the end of the IV tubing and begin infusion of LR or NS. Adjust the rate to the needs of the patient within the limits of the catheter.
    8. Administer medications though IV tubing port if indicated.

C. If there is a capped needle-type port on the distal end of the catheter, perform the following: *(figure 2)*
    1. Scrub the cap with an alcohol pad for at least 15 seconds and allow to dry for at least 5 seconds.
    2. Clamp the catheter tubing using ONLY the existing clamp on the catheter and then remove the cap. **Never allow a central line to be open to air.**
    3. Attach a 10 ml syringe on the catheter end.
    4. Unclamp the catheter.
    5. Attempt to aspirate at least 5 ml of blood. Blood should draw freely. If it does not, re-clamp the line and remove the syringe. DO NOT use the catheter for access.
    6. If blood aspirates freely, clamp the catheter again.
    7. Remove the 10 ml syringe with blood and discard.
    8. Attach a 10 ml syringe with LR or NS.
    9. Unclamp and gently flush the line. Never use a smaller syringe. If line does not flush, re-clamp the line and remove the syringe. DO NOT use the catheter for access.
    10. If line flushes, re-clamp and remove the syringe.

11. Attach the catheter to the end of the IV tubing.

12. Unclamp the catheter and begin infusion of LR or NS. Adjust the rate according to the needs of the patient within the limits of the catheter.
13. Administer medications though IV tubing port if indicated.

NOTES & PRECAUTIONS:

A. **Do not administer medications, flush or aspirate with less than a 10 cc syringe. Smaller size syringes generate too much pressure and can damage the catheter.**
B. **Do not attempt reinjection of aspirated blood as it may contain clots.**
C. The maximum flow rates for a PICC line is 125 ml/hr for less than size 2.0 French, and 250 ml/hr for catheters over 2.0 size French.
D. Keep patient's arm straight to avoiding kinking the PICC line and obstructing flow.
E. Ensure all line connections are secure.
F. PICC lines access the patient's central circulation and the risk of infection is high. Avoid contamination to ports and connections while accessing.
G. **Do not administer the following medications through a PICC line:**
    a. **Adenosine** - The line may rupture during rapid infusion due to over pressurization.
    b. **Dextrose 50%** – The catheter can be damaged by due to the viscosity of the fluid.

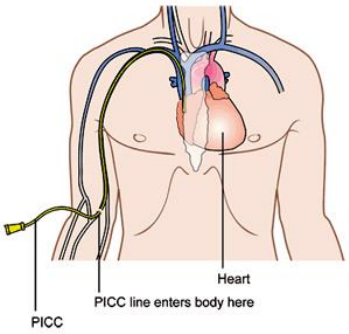

Figure 1- Needless port

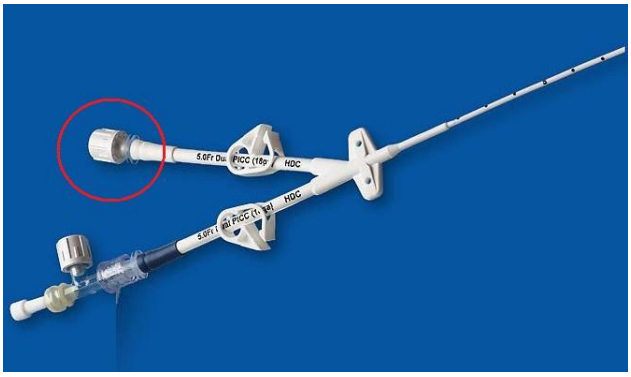

Figure 2 – Non-needless type port with cap