

Venous Access Devices (PICC, Port, Hickman Line)

Your doctor has requested that we implant a device for venous access (PICC, Hickman, and Port). There are a variety of these devices available that have different clinical applications related to the type of therapy your doctor proposes to provide you with. We have left the selection of the most appropriate venous access device to the discretion of your doctor. If you have any questions or concerns about the type of device that has been selected for implantation please do not hesitate to discuss this with your doctor before attending your appointment for the device implantation.

The venous access devices we implant are inserted under x-ray or ultrasound guidance to enter into a vein in your arm, upper chest, or neck dependent upon the device selected. The procedure is performed using a sterile preparation and the injection of local anesthetic. At the completion of the procedure a sterile dressing will be applied to protect the skin insertion site.

Complications of venous access device insertion include the following:

1. Local bleeding at the insertion site - This is extremely uncommon and we attempt to ensure that there is no evidence of bleeding at the site before you leave the procedure room.
2. Infection of the insertion site or the venous access device - This is very uncommon and usually happens well after device insertion. This can occur in 2 - 6% of patients during the duration of the device implantation. If you notice any signs or symptoms of infection (fever, chills, shaking, redness at site, pus draining at site, or swollen lymph nodes) contact your doctor immediately and have him/her assess the situation.
3. Blood clot formation related to the device - The device is a foreign body and may incite the formation of blood clots inside the veins. This occurs in 2 - 5% of patients during the duration of device implantation. Signs and symptoms of blood clots are a very swollen arm with distended veins on the surface of the arm, tender arm with difficulty bending due to discomfort and swelling.
4. Pneumothorax (collapse of the lung) - This can occur when devices are implanted in the neck and upper chest area. This is very uncommon due to the use of ultrasound and x-ray guidance during implantation. It can occur in 0.5 - 1% of patients at the time of device insertion in the upper chest and base of neck.