

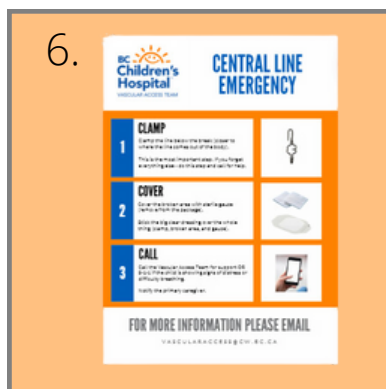
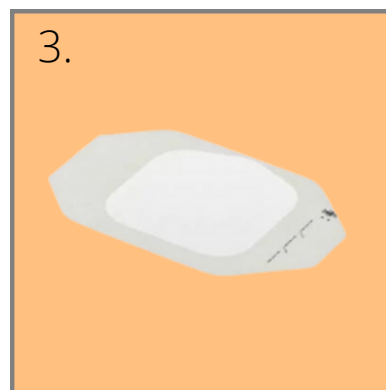
# Dealing with problems

**Always keep an emergency kit with your child** in case there is a break in the PICC line. You will know the catheter is broken if there is fluid leaking from the catheter, or blood coming from the line. A break in the PICC line is a medical emergency.

The PIVOT team will provide you with an emergency kit and teach you how to use it before you go home.

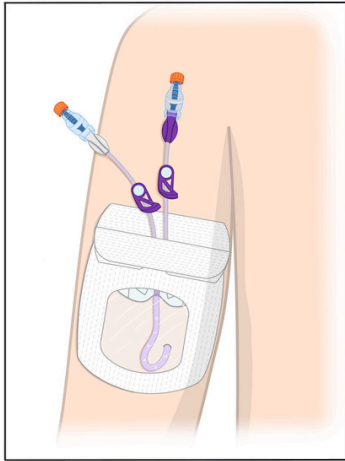
## Your emergency kit includes:

1. Bulldog clamp
2. Sterile gauze
3. Transparent dressing
4. Chlorhexidine or alcohol swab
5. Needleless connector/cap
6. Clamp, Cover, Call emergency card

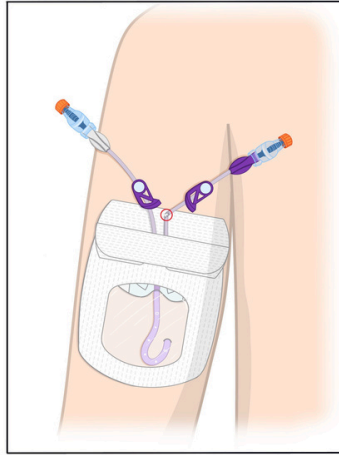


# Dealing with problems

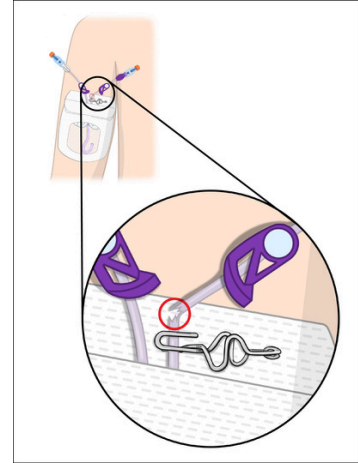
The steps for securing a broken PICC Line are **clamp, cover, call**. The PIVOT team will give you a “clamp, cover, call” handout with your emergency supplies and practice this skill with you.



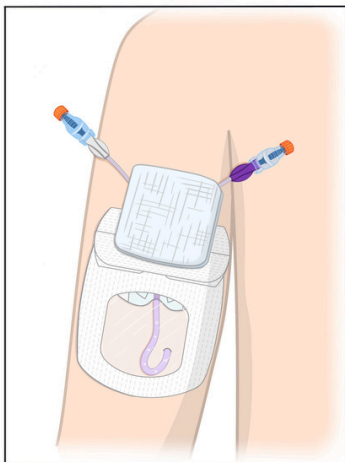
Unbroken PICC.



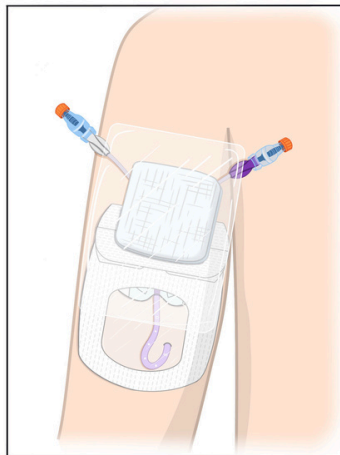
A break in the line occurs.



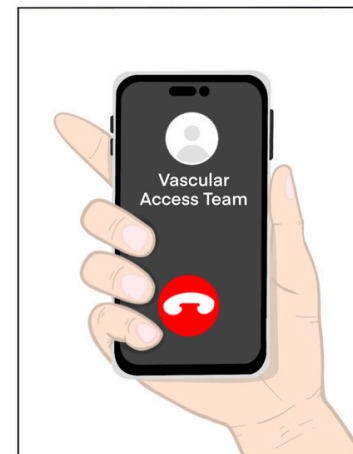
Use the **bulldog clamp** to clamp the line below the break, or closer to where the line comes out of the body.



Cover the break and the clamp with sterile gauze.



Cover everything with a large transparent dressing.



Call the PIVOT Clinic / Vascular Access Team for support or 911 if the child is showing signs of distress or difficulty breathing.

# Dealing with problems

## To avoid breaks in the catheter:

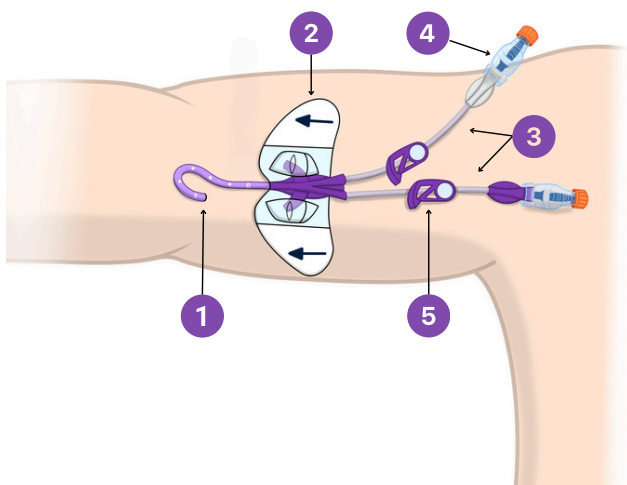
- Keep scissors and sharp objects away from the catheter.
- Keep pets away from the catheter.
- Use the plastic clamp (5) on the catheter. Only use the metal bulldog clamp from your emergency kit for emergencies.
- When you clamp the catheter, try to vary where you place the clamp. Move it up or down a couple of millimetres.

The **cap** (4) on the end of the catheter can become loose, cracked or detached. You will know the cap has a problem if fluid or blood leaks from the cap, or the cap is loose or comes off. If the cap is loose, try to tighten it.

## If the cap is cracked or disconnected:

- Clamp the catheter.
- If the end of the catheter is exposed, cover it with sterile gauze as quickly as you can.
- Scrub the end of the catheter with a chlorhexidine or alcohol swab for 30 seconds. Then, let it dry for 1 minute.
- Twist new cap on the PICC.
- Call your health-care team.

It is important to check the PICC line regularly to make sure all the connections are secure.



1. Exit site
2. Stat-lock
3. Lumens
4. Needleless connector or cap
5. Clamp

# Dealing with problems

## **Air in the Catheter: EMERGENCY**

There may be air in the catheter if:

- your child has trouble breathing or chest pain; or
- there is a break or opening in the catheter.

### **Here's what to do:**

1. Clamp the catheter near the exit site.
2. Lie your child down on their left side with their head down.
3. Phone an ambulance and go to the nearest emergency department.

## **Plugged Catheter**

Occasionally, the catheter will get plugged. You will know this is happening if there is resistance when flushing the catheter. Do not attempt to clear the blockage yourself.

If this happens, let your team know as soon as possible. If this happens overnight call the PIVOT Clinic or Vascular Access Team in the morning. Your health-care team must evaluate your child's PICC. Your child may need medication to clear the blockage.

## **Catheter comes out: EMERGENCY**

*If the line is pulled out from the site and there is bleeding from the exit site:*

1. Press on the exit site with at least two fingers and firm pressure for 5 minutes to stop the bleeding.
  2. Open sterile gauze and tape it over the exit site firmly. Keep applying pressure until the bleeding stops.
  3. Go to the nearest emergency department.
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# Dealing with problems

Check your child's PICC dressing regularly. Reinforce the dressing when it starts to lift. If you cannot keep the dressing stuck to your child's arm, contact the PIVOT clinic, Vascular Access Team or the centre where your child's dressings are changed.

## Preventing problems

Always secure the PICC with a PICC cover. This reduces pulling on the catheter.

## Other caregivers

Tell anyone else who will be looking after your child about the PICC line. This includes, babysitters and teachers. They should know what problems to look for, and what to do. Review the *Returning to the community with a central line* presentation with them.

Leave important phone numbers in a safe place and show other caregivers where you keep the spare clamp and gauze and how to use it.

## You are not alone

At first, caring for your child's PICC can feel difficult or scary. Remember you are not alone.

Nurses are here to support you. Call us if you have any questions.

If you need more practice, tell your nurse. They will help you.

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