

Swan-Ganz Catheter

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The doctor has recommended the use of a Swan-Ganz catheter as part of your family member's treatment. There are many reasons for the use of this catheter, which measures the pressures inside the heart chambers.

The doctor or critical care nurse will tell you how the catheter will help with your family member's condition.

What the Catheter Does

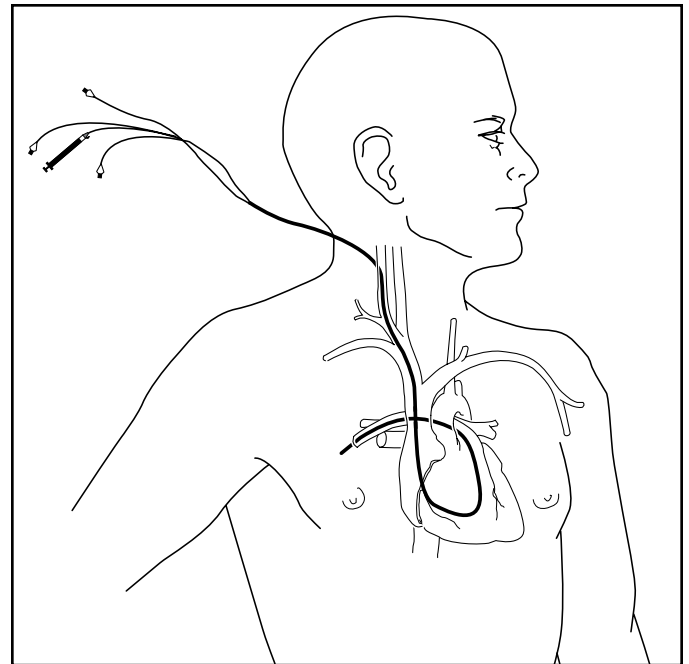
A Swan-Ganz catheter (tube) is a special type of long, thin and flexible tube. The doctor places it into a large blood vessel in the arm, leg or chest.

The catheter is then threaded into the blood vessels, which enter the heart. From there, the tube stays in the pulmonary artery, a blood vessel near the heart.

What the Catheter Does

The Swan-Ganz catheter does many things which can help the doctors and nurses care for your family member.

- The Swan-Ganz catheter can measure the pressures inside the heart chambers.
- Samples of blood can also be taken through the catheter.
- Nurses can perform tests to measure how the heart is pumping.
- Medicines can be given through the catheter.



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The Swan-Ganz catheter can measure the pressures inside the heart chambers.

How the Catheter is Placed

- The doctor will numb the area where the catheter will be placed.
- He or she will insert the catheter into the arm, leg or chest and stitch it into place.
- The catheter will stay in place for a few days, depending on your family member's condition.

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Discomfort

If your family member feels any discomfort, pain medicine will be available.

When the Catheter is Removed

A doctor or critical care nurse will remove the catheter when it is no longer needed. A small bandage will cover the site for a few hours.

What You Can Do

You can contribute to your family member's care in many ways. You can feel comfortable talking about your family member's care with his or her nurse.

If you have any questions, please ask the nurses or doctors.