

Subcutaneous Injection

You can give yourself subcutaneous injections at home safely and accurately with proper care and technique. This handout will guide you through the steps to give yourself an injection. If you have any questions or concerns, please ask your health care clinician. The clinic phone number is _____.

Supplies

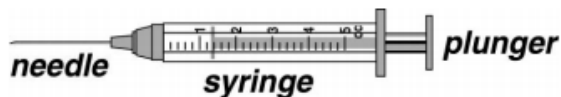
- Needles and syringes
- Alcohol swabs or bottle of rubbing alcohol and cotton balls
- Gauze pad
- Vial with the drug solution
- Sharps Container (See HFFY #4587)
- Band-Aids®

Steps

1. Wash hands well with soap and water. Gather the supplies you need and place them on a clean, dry surface.

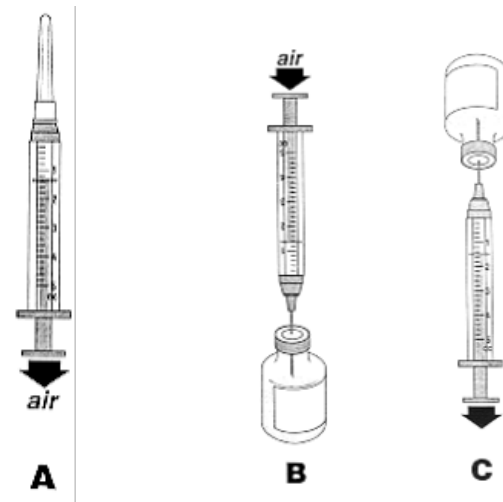
Note: If your syringe is already drawn up, skip steps 2-9.

2. Screw a needle on the syringe hub unless your syringe comes with a needle already attached.



3. Vial: Flip off the plastic top. Use an alcohol swab and wipe that area well using outward circular motion for 10 seconds.
4. Remove the needle cover. To draw air into the syringe, pull the plunger back to the correct volume, _____ cc (ml). (Diagram A)

5. Insert the needle straight into the vial through the rubber top. Inject air into the bottle by pushing down on the plunger. (Diagram B)
6. Using one hand, turn the vial with the syringe upside down. Be sure the needle is in the bottle and below the fluid level. Draw back the plunger to the correct mark, _____ ml. (Diagram C)

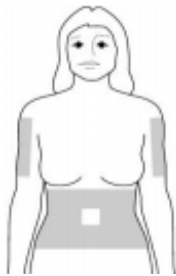


7. Keeping the needle in the vial, check for air bubbles in the syringe. If there are air bubbles, gently tap the syringe with your fingers until the air bubbles rise to the top of the syringe. Then slowly push the plunger up to force the air bubbles out of the syringe.
8. Keep the needle in the liquid and again pull the plunger back to the number on the syringe that matches your dose. Check again for air bubbles. If there are still air bubbles, repeat step 7 again until there are no longer air bubbles.

9. Remove the needle from the vial. Be very careful not to stick yourself. Never place the syringe with uncovered needle on the surface you are working on.

Now, you are ready to inject.

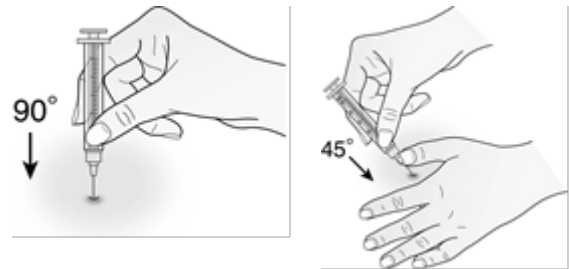
Subcutaneous injections are given into the fatty tissue in the body. To give yourself the injection you can either use the stomach area (at least 2 inches away from the belly button) or the back of the arm (see picture below). Avoid any scars, bruises, or swollen areas.



10. Clean the area where you will give the shot with soap and water or an alcohol pad. Allow it to dry. Sit in a comfortable position so you can clearly see where you will give the shot.
11. Pull the cap straight off the needle using care to avoid poking yourself. Keep the needle sterile once you have removed the cap. Do not set the needle down or touch the needle. Hold the syringe like a pencil in the hand that you write with.
12. **If you were taught to pinch up skin:** With the other hand gently pinch the clean spot between your thumb and fingers to make a fold in the skin. Be sure to hold the skin fold until the injection is complete.

If you were taught not to pinch up skin: Hold the syringe or pen with one hand; keep your other hand away from the injection site.

Insert the needle into the skin fold, holding the syringe at a 90° angle. If you have very little fatty tissue or are using longer needles, you may need to inject at a 45° angle (see pictures below). Ask your health care team what is best for you.



13. Reach up with your pointer finger to the syringe plunger. Press down until all the medicine has been pushed out and into the fatty tissue.
14. Remove the needle by gently and quickly pulling it out and away from the skin fold. You can now let go of the skin fold. Do not rub the site after you are finished. Rubbing may bruise the site or affect how the medicine is absorbed. You can gently wipe away any blood with a gauze pad and apply a Band-Aid® if needed.
15. Drop the used syringe or pen needle - needle first - into the “Sharps Box” or other hard plastic container (see HFFY 4587 for information about sharps containers). Do not recap the needle! Close the lid and move the box out of the reach of children.
16. Do not give yourself an injection in the same place every time. It may help to write down the site where you gave your last injection and the date. This way you can make sure you always use a different site.