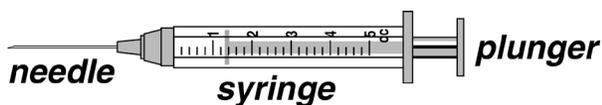


## How to Give Yourself Intramuscular (IM) Injections

You can give yourself intramuscular injections at home safely 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 provider. The clinic phone number is \_\_\_\_\_.

### Supplies:

- Needles and syringes
- Alcohol swabs or gauze
- Vial with the drug solution
- Sharps Container (HFFY #4587)
- Band-Aids®



### Steps:

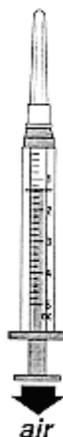
1. Wash your hands well with soap and water. Gather the supplies you need and place them on a clean, dry surface.

**Note:** If your syringe is already drawn up, skip steps 2-7.

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

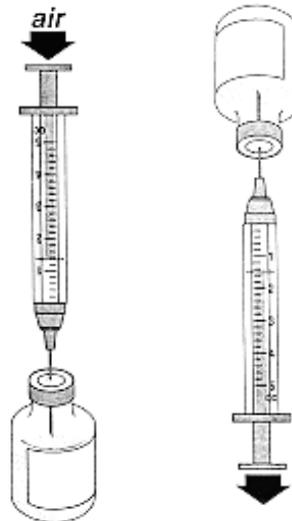
3. Vial: Flip off the plastic top. Use an alcohol swab and wipe that area well using outward circular motion for 10 seconds.

4. Remove the needle cover. To draw air into the syringe, pull the plunger back to the correct volume, \_\_\_\_\_ cc (ml). (Diagram A)



**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)



**B**

**C**

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. Check for air bubbles in the syringe. Bubbles can be removed by flicking the syringe with your finger.

If the air bubble is at the top of the syringe, push gently on the plunger so the air goes back to the bottle. Before removing the needle, be sure you have the proper amount in the syringe.

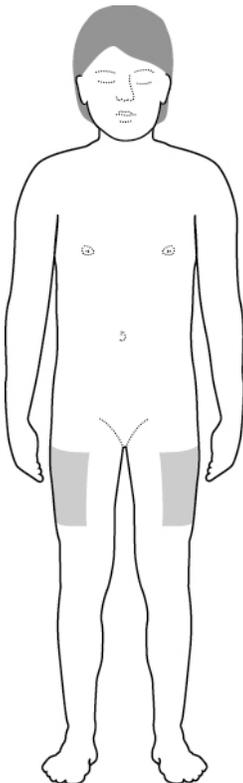
8. Remove the needle from the vial. It is OK to put the cover on the needle for a short time. Be very careful not to stick yourself. Never place the syringe with uncovered needle on the surface you are working on.

**Note:** You should not inject more than 3 mL at one site. If the amount is more than 3 mL, then divide the drug solution into two equal volumes and inject at two different sites. For example, your dose is 5 mL. Use 2 syringes with 2.5 mL in each one and inject the medicine at 2 different sites.

**Now, you are ready to inject!**

Give intramuscular injections into a muscle. To give yourself an injection you will use your thigh.

9. Use the middle outer part of the thigh to inject. The best area is one hand length below the hip and one hand length above the knee. Use a 20-22 gauge, 1-1½ needle. See the shaded area on the figure.



10. Clean the skin area with an alcohol swab, unless otherwise instructed by your health care provider. Clean an area 2 inches in diameter. Use firm circular motions while moving outward from the injection site. Let the area dry for 20 seconds.

11. Remove the needle cover. Never touch the needle.
12. Spread the skin at the site between your thumb and index finger using your left hand if you are right-handed or your right hand if you are left-handed (non dominant hand). It will be helpful if you have an alcohol swab or clean gauze ready to cover the site once you have pulled the needle out.

13. With your dominant hand, hold the syringe like a dart at a 90° angle to the site.



14. Insert the needle straight into the skin with a quick firm motion.
15. Supporting the syringe with your nondominant hand, pull the plunger slightly with your dominant hand to check for blood unless your health care provider has told you this step is not needed. If you see blood in the syringe, do not inject the medicine and take the syringe out and throw it away in a Sharps container. Put gentle pressure on the site with the alcohol wipe or gauze for 30 seconds. You can massage gently. Start over with steps 2-9 to draw up a

new dose of medicine and inject at a new site.

16. If there is no blood, inject the medicine slowly until the syringe is empty.
17. Take the needle out quickly, at the angle in which it was injected.
18. Place an alcohol swab or gauze at the injection site and put pressure on the site for 30 seconds to 1 minute.
19. Throw away the needle and syringe in the Sharps container. Do not recap the needle!
20. Do not give yourself an injection in the same place every time. You may want to use your left thigh one time and your right thigh the next. 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.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright ©5/2019. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#5450.