



SAFE INJECTION PRACTICES



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SAFE INJECTION PRACTICES TO PREVENT INFECTION

Did you know? Improper use of injectable medications (or unsafe injection practices) can put you or a loved one at risk of disease transmission, including bacterial infections or bloodborne pathogens like hepatitis C virus. Self-administration of injectable medications requires the same infection prevention techniques in the home as they do in the doctor's office.

Here is what you should know about safe injection practices: If your doctor decides home injections are the best option for you, you will need one-on-one injection training from your doctor or OptiMed. The medicine also comes with a pamphlet with instructions. Ask for training as often as you need it. If you don't feel comfortable giving yourself the injection, ask for additional guidance.

What are safe injection practices? Safe injection practices are a set of practices that healthcare providers – or anyone who gives an injection, like patients and caretakers providing self-injection at home (you!) – should follow when giving an injection. Some examples include discarding a needle and syringe after one use (in other words, do not save or use the same needle or syringe again), as well as washing hands to avoid contaminating injection areas.

What supplies will help me practice safe injections? Alcohol swabs are used to disinfect the skin of the injection site before giving the medication, and puncture-resistant sharps containers provide a safe way to dispose of used needles or sharps. Both of these supplies are provided for you by OptiMed.

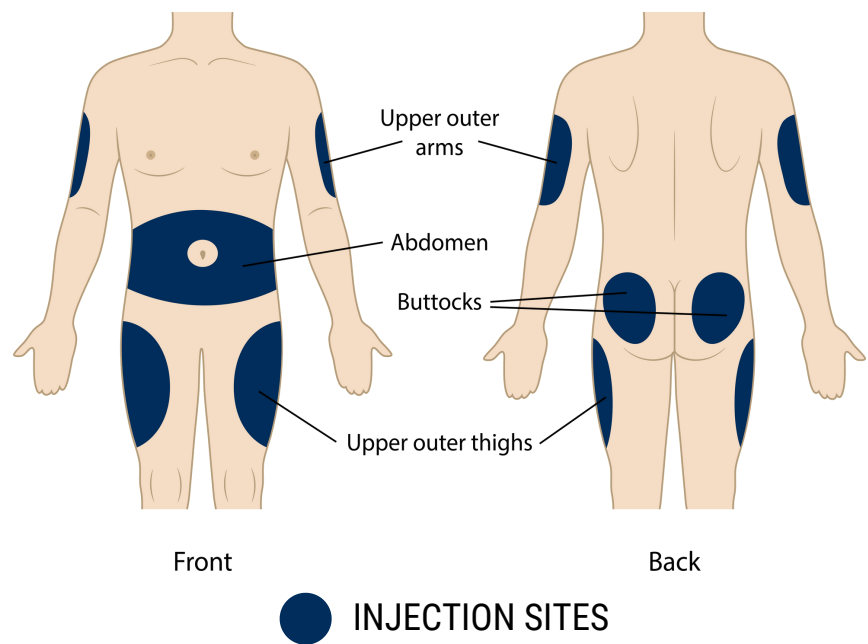
Why are safe injection practices so important? These practices will prevent the spread of diseases like hepatitis B, hepatitis C, or HIV, as well as reduce the risk of skin or other more serious infections.

Remember: A good rule to remember is -- One Needle, One Syringe, Only One Time.

Ask your pharmacist about the difference between single use syringes, single use vials, and multi-dose vials.

What are some general safe injection practices I should know? While each injection medication may have its own set of directions for administration, use these general practices in addition to help prevent infection:

- **Gather all the supplies you need.** In addition to the medication, swabs, bandages, etc, it is important to have your puncture-resistant sharps container readily available immediately after an injection.
- **Inspect the medication** to be sure it has not expired, that it has been stored correctly, that it is sealed appropriately, and its appearance matches the description from the manufacturer.



- **Wash your hands with soap and water** before injecting yourself or your loved one. This will help keep the area clean and reduce your chances of an infection.
- **Sit down for your injection.** Sitting will help you pay attention and focus. Additionally, and while rare, some people feel faint after an injection so sitting in a chair may prevent a fall.
- **Disinfect the skin at the injection site** using an isopropyl alcohol swab, wiping in a circular motion. Let the area dry. Do NOT touch this area until you give the injection. Do NOT fan or blow on the clean area.
- **Prepare the needle according to the instructions.** This step varies depending on if your medication is in a vial, a pre-filled syringe or pen, or an IV bag. Contact your nurse or pharmacist for questions or re-training.
- **Follow instructions for giving the medication** regarding where and how to administer the medicine.
- **Discard needle and syringe in a puncture-resistant sharps container.** A sharps container will be provided with instructions on proper disposal once it is full.

QUESTIONS?

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