

Injections: Subcutaneous

Sometimes medicine is given by injection (shot) when it cannot be given by mouth. A subcutaneous, or "sub-Q," injection is given under the skin (not into a muscle). When you give your child an injection, you may need someone to help you. If your child is old enough to understand, explain why the shot must be given. Try to get your child's mind off the shot. Let him or her play with a toy or squeeze someone's hand. A child of any age should be allowed to express fear and dislike of the shot.

You will need

- Medicine ordered by your doctor
- Bottle of 70% alcohol
- ____ mL disposable syringe
- Cotton ball or alcohol swabs
- ____-gauge needles or size ____
- Adhesive bandage (optional)
- Filter needle (for use with ampules)
- "Sharps" container for syringe disposal

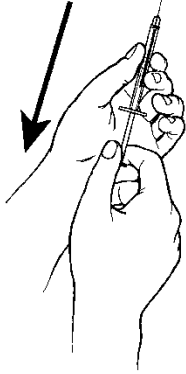
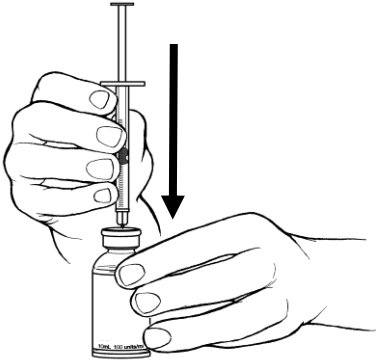
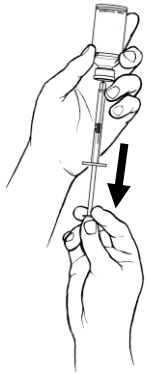
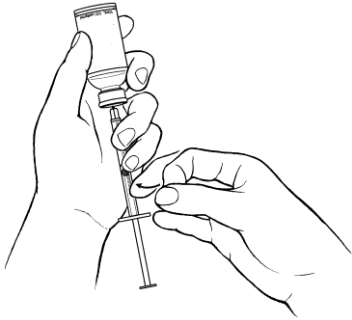
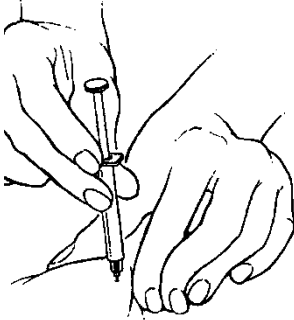
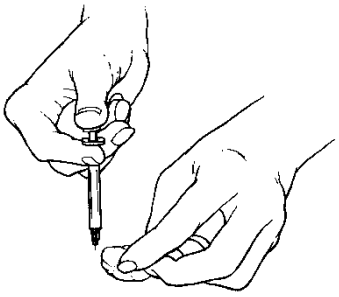
How to give an injection

1. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 15 seconds. Rinse and dry.
2. Read the label on the bottle and make sure it is the right medicine.
3. Clean the top of the bottle well with an alcohol swab or a cotton ball dipped in alcohol. Let the alcohol dry completely.
4. Remove the needle cover from the disposable syringe. (If you need to attach the needle, leave the needle inside the package while you attach it to the syringe.) Push the plunger back and forth to make sure it moves freely.

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How to give an injection, continued

Bottles with Rubber Stoppers

 <p>5. Pull air up into the syringe equal to the amount of medicine to be given.</p>	 <p>6. Put the bottle on a table. Push the needle through the rubber stopper. Pick up the bottle. Push the air into the bottle.</p>	 <p>7. Turn the bottle upside down. Pull the plunger back to draw medicine into the syringe. There may be a small amount of air also.</p>
 <p>8. Hold the syringe pointed up. Tap gently to make air bubbles rise. Gently push on the plunger to force air bubbles out. Move the plunger up or down to measure the amount of medicine needed.</p>	 <p>9. Choose a site for the injection. Clean the skin with a cotton ball dipped in alcohol or an alcohol swab. Let it dry. Pinch up the skin where you were taught to give the shot. (Be careful not to touch the place where the shot will be given.)</p> <p>10. Hold the syringe like a pencil. Slip the needle quickly through the skin at a 45° angle.</p>	 <p>11. Give the medicine by pushing down on the plunger.</p> <p>12. Count to 5. This gives time for the medicine to move into the tissue. Remove needle and syringe from the injection site. Hold a cotton ball over the site for a few seconds. Put an adhesive bandage on the injection site if your child wants one.</p> <p>Caution: If you puncture your skin by mistake, wash the area well with soap and water. Call the doctor.</p>

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How to give an injection, continued

Medicine from an Ampule

1. Follow steps 1 and 2 on page 1.
2. Clean the neck of the ampule with an alcohol swab or a cotton ball dipped in alcohol.
3. Remove the filter needle cover from the disposable syringe. (If you need to attach the filter needle, leave the filter needle inside the package while you attach it to the syringe.) Push the plunger back and forth to make sure it moves freely.
4. Cover the ampule with the cotton ball dipped in alcohol or alcohol swab and snap off the top.
5. Hold the ampule with your thumb and first finger. Put the needle tip into the solution. Pull back on the syringe plunger to get the medicine into the syringe. Tilt the ampule as needed. Be sure that the right amount of medicine is in the syringe.
6. Replace the filter needle with a regular needle.
7. Follow steps 8 through 12 (above) for giving the injection.
8. Throw away the used filter needle and ampule in the "sharps" container.

How to dispose of the used needle and syringe

1. **Do not recap the used needle. Do not bend or break off the needle. Do not remove the needle from the syringe.**
2. Put the used syringe with attached needle into the "sharps" container.
3. Put the "sharps" container into a brown paper bag and return it to your doctor or clinic when it is two-thirds (2/3) full or the next time you come to the office or clinic.

Storage of equipment

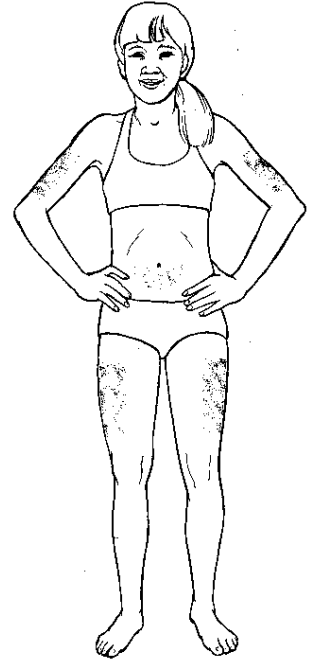
- Store items in a cupboard out of the reach of children and others who might misuse them.
- Keep items clean and free of dust.
- Some medicines must be kept in the refrigerator. Check with your doctor, nurse or pharmacist on how to store your medicine.

Injection areas and sites

Injection areas are the places on your body where you can give your medicine (Picture 1). Injection sites are the actual spots where you put the medicine in. There are several "sites" in each "area".

Injections may be given into the:

- Upper, outer leg (thigh)
- Lower abdomen (except the area right around the navel and waistline)
- Upper, outer arm
- Upper hip (buttocks) (See Picture 2)



Picture 1 Shaded places show where injections should be given. These are the "injection areas."

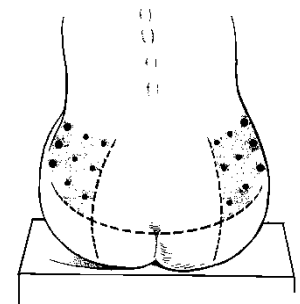
Rotating injection sites

Rotating injection sites means giving the injection into a different place each time. Changing sites is the best way to avoid skin problems (See Picture 1 and 2). If you give the injection in the very same place each time, this area of skin will become sunken or hard and lumpy. Medicine that is given into hard or sunken areas will not be absorbed well.

How to begin your rotation plan

Plan 1. Choose one leg to start your child's rotation plan. When all injection sites are used on this leg, move to the next area. For example, start with the left leg and go to the right leg. Then go to the right arm, to the left arm, then back to the left leg. By doing this, you will let each injection area "rest" for a few weeks between injections.

Plan 2. Choose one side of the body for the first injection. Then use the same site on the other side of the body for the next injection.



Picture 2 Shaded area on the buttocks shows injection areas and sites.

If you have any questions, please ask your doctor or nurse or call _____.