

1 PREPARE YOUR BODY AND SUPPLIES

Prevent infections.

- Use a new sterile needle and syringe and supplies for each injection.
- Wash your hands with soap and water before injecting.
- Use an alcohol wipe to clean the injection spot. Wipe in a circle starting from the middle and moving outward.

Use clean water to wash and mix substances.

- **BEST:** sterile water
- **GOOD:** new bottled water or water than has boiled and cooled
 - Keep bottled water lids on.
 - Boil water for 1 minute, let it cool, use it within a day.
- **OKAY:** tap water
 - If using toilet water, use from the tank.

Collect your own supplies.

- Avoid reusing or sharing needles, syringes, or cookers.

New supplies are safest.

- Wet cottons grow bacteria and fungus. Reusing them can cause infections like Cotton Fever.
- Cigarette filters contain fiberglass, which is harmful.
- Change your tie when:
 - It has blood or dirt on it.
 - Someone else used it.
 - It is worn down.

Needle size matters.

Length: How long the needle is

- IV: 8mm ($\frac{5}{16}$ "") to 12mm ($\frac{1}{2}$ "")
- IM: 1-1 $\frac{1}{2}$ "

Gauge: How big the needle hole is

- IV: 14G-31G; usually 27G-31G for unregulated substances
- IM: 23G-25G

2 CHOOSE A SPOT

Some places are safer to inject.

- Inject towards the heart with the bevel up.
- Rotate injection sites to give skin time to heal and reduce scarring.
- Try arms before hands, hands before wrists, wrists before feet.
- Avoid neck and groin areas.

Be gentle with injecting.

- Take your time.
- Drinking water = bigger veins.
- Use a tourniquet to find veins.
- Warm the injection area, squeeze towels, move around.
- Smoking or snorting a test dose can help reduce pokes.
- Carefully remove the needle at the same angle it went in.
- Use gauze to apply gentle but firm pressure.

3 TAKE CARE

Tend to your body.

- Seek medical help early if you notice redness, warmth, pus, or pain at the injection site.
- Avoid injecting into red, swollen, or painful areas.
- Avoid using alcohol pads after injecting.
- Do not use peroxide. It stops healthy tissue from growing.
- Don't lick the needle or injection site—mouth bacteria can cause serious infections.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Know about pills and acids.

- Try to filter pills more than once to reduce the amount of solid pill bits.
- Too much acid can harm your skin and veins. Use as little acid as possible.
- Vitamin C powder is the safest acid option.
- Lemon juice, vinegar, and sugary drinks can cause fungal infections.

Dispose of used supplies safely.

- Use a sharps container or thick plastic bottle.

PARTS OF A SYRINGE:

Plunger

Seals the substance inside the syringe and pushes it out

Hub

Connects the barrel to the needle

Barrel

Measures and holds the substance, typically $\frac{1}{3}$ CC to 5 CC

Dead space

Leftover substance that remains inside the syringe after the plunger is fully depressed

Flange

Finger support and stopper for plunger

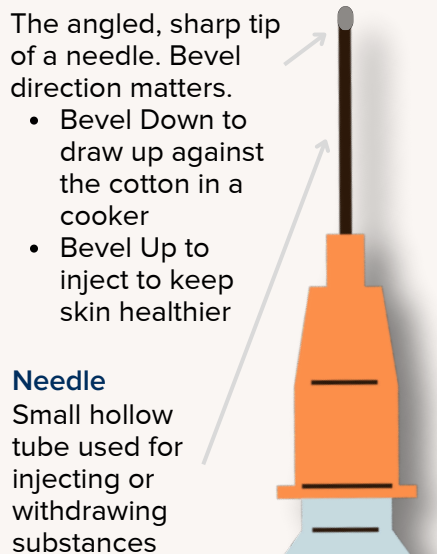
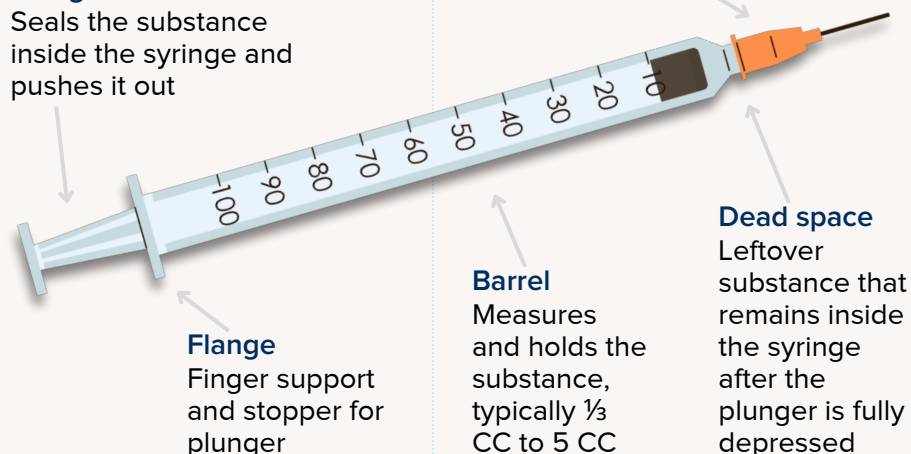
Bevel

The angled, sharp tip of a needle. Bevel direction matters.

- Bevel Down to draw up against the cotton in a cooker
- Bevel Up to inject to keep skin healthier

Needle

Small hollow tube used for injecting or withdrawing substances



Check in with your local harm reduction program for more information, supplies, and resources.