

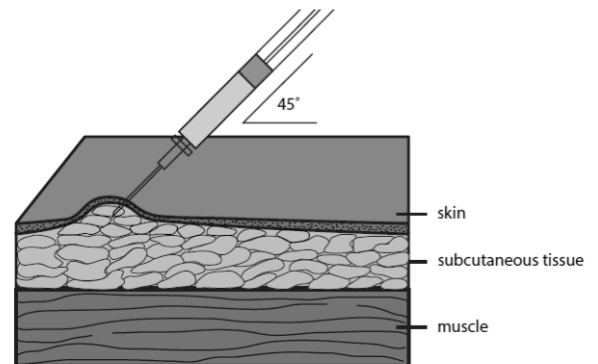


## Integrity Women's Health & Wellness, LLC

### Injection Guide: How to give yourself a subcutaneous (SQ) injection

#### What is a subcutaneous injection?

- An intramuscular injection delivers medication into the layer of tissue that is directly under the skin (subcutaneous). Medication delivered this way is more slowly absorbed into the bloodstream than medication injected intramuscularly (IM)
- Subcutaneous injections can be given at a 45 or 90 degree angle
- Needles for SQ injections are usually 25-26 Gauge, and 5/8 " (inches) in length. Always use a separate needle to draw up medication; never use a SQ needle to draw up medication!



#### **NEVER REUSE OR SHARE SYRINGES OR NEEDLES!**

#### **Step 1: Set up for your injection**

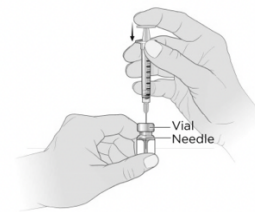
1. Find a comfortable, well-lit place to give yourself your injection.
2. Clean your work area and assemble the supplies:
  - Medication in a vial
  - Disposable syringe and two needles – one 18G needle (to draw up medication) and one injection needle (25-26G; 5/8")
  - Alcohol swabs, two (one for vial, one for skin)
  - Puncture proof needle/sharps disposal container
3. Check the expiration date on the medication. Do not use a medication if it has visible particles, is discolored, or is expired.
4. Wash your hands with soap and warm water. Hand washing is one of the most important things you can do to prevent infection.

#### **Step 2: Prepare your injection dose**

1. If you want, you can warm the vial of medication by rubbing it between your hands before



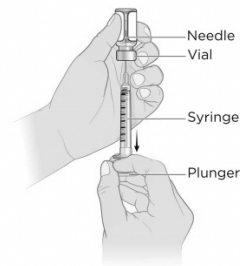
<p>preparing the syringe. This may help with some discomfort during the injection.</p>
<p>2. Take the cap off the vial. Clean the rubber stopper with one alcohol swab and allow it to air dry.</p>
<p>3. Check the package containing the syringe. If the package has been opened or damaged, do not use the syringe.</p>
<p>4. Hold the 18G needle by the packaging or the cap and place it securely on the syringe. Do not touch the base of the needle that attaches to the syringe.</p>
<p>5. Pull the 18G needle cover straight off the syringe.</p>
<p>6. Pull back the plunger and draw air into the syringe. The amount of air drawn into the syringe should be the same amount (mL or cc) as the dose of medication that your clinician prescribed. <b>Do not let the needle touch any surfaces!</b></p>
<p>7. Keep the vial on your working space, with the rubber stopper facing up, and insert the needle straight down through the center of the rubber stopper into the bottle.</p>
<p>8. Push the plunger of the syringe down and push the air from the syringe into the vial.</p>
<p>9. Keeping the needle in the vial, use your other hand to turn the vial upside-down. Do not let go of the vial!</p>



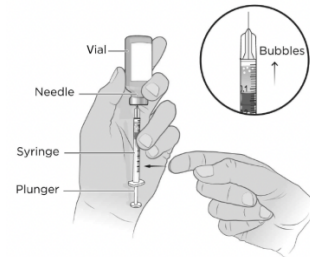


10. Position the needle so the liquid is covering the tip of the needle.

11. Keep the vial upside-down and slowly pull back on the plunger until the syringe is filled with the number (mL or cc) that matches the dose your clinician prescribed you. As you remove the medication from the vial, the level in the bottle decreases. You may have to lower the needle below the fluid level to draw up as much medication as you need.



12. 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 **without** removing the needle from the bottle.



13. After air bubbles are gone, pull the plunger back to the number (mL or cc) marking on the syringe that matches your dose.

14. Pull the syringe with needle out of the bottle, remove the 18G needle (discarding it into the sharps container, without recapping it).

15. Hold the IM injection needle by the packaging or the cap and place it securely on the syringe.

- a. **Do not touch the base of the needle that attaches to the syringe.**
- b. **Do not remove the protective cap from the needle until you are ready to inject.**

16. Gently push the plunger to the number (mL or cc) matching your dose, making sure that you have the correct dose in the syringe. It is **very** important that you use the exact dose prescribed by your clinician.



### Step 3: Select and prepare the injection site

There are several injection sites you can give a SQ injection. Wherever you choose to inject, you should be able to firmly grasp the skin and pinch it up into approximately a 1-inch fold.



Injection Site on the side of the arm

#### 2. Injection site on the abdomen

- If you choose to inject yourself in the abdomen, avoid the belly button or any bony areas.



Injection Site on the abdomen

#### 3. Injection site on the back of the arm



Injection Site on the back of the arms

#### 4. Injection site on the thighs



Injection Site on the thighs

- #### 5. If you want, you can apply ice or an over-the-counter numbing cream to the



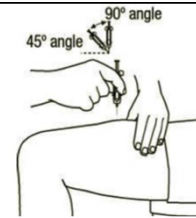
injection site before cleaning it. This may help with discomfort.

6. Clean the injection site with a new alcohol swab; let the skin air dry. (If you do not let it air dry, it might cause stinging during the injection.) **Do not touch this area again until you give the injection.**

#### Step 4: Give the injection

1. Remove the protective cap from the injecting needle and check one more time that the correct dose is in the syringe.

2. Hold the skin around the injection site by pinching up a section of tissue about an inch wide. (The portion of skin between your fingers will be the injection site.)



3. With one quick and firm motion, insert the needle either directly into the skin fold at a 90 degree angle, or angle it slightly (45 degrees), if that is easier.
  - Push the needle through the skin in a smooth, single motion. Try not to hesitate.
  - Do not push the needle into the skin slowly or thrust the needle into the skin with a lot of force.
  - Do not press down on the top of the plunger while piercing the skin.
4. After inserting the needle into the skin, lift your hand away from where it is holding the skin.
5. Gently pull back on the plunger of the syringe to check for blood.
  - If you see blood in the syringe, DO NOT INJECT the medicine. Remove the needle immediately, replace the SQ needle, and try again at a different site.



- If you do not see any blood in the syringe, you can complete the injection by pushing the medicine slowly under the skin.
  - Do not force the medicine by pushing too hard.
  - You may feel some burning or pressure as the medication enters the tissue.

6. Wait 5 seconds after injecting the medication, then pull back on the syringe at the same angle it went in to remove the needle from your skin.

7. Dispose of the syringe and needle properly, using a sharps container.



8. Gently press an alcohol swab, cotton ball, or gauze on the injection site.
- Hold pressure on the site until the bleeding has stopped.
  - You can use a band aid if necessary.

### **Tips for reducing injection pain**

- Never reuse needles!
- Use separate drawing up and injecting needles
- Let the skin dry fully from the alcohol wipe before beginning the injection
- Inject medicine that is at room temperature
- Break through the skin quickly with the needle
- Insert the needle straight into the skin, and pull it straight out again without changing direction or wiggling the syringe.