

How to give yourself a Subcutaneous Injection

- A Guide for Patients -

The information in this document is intended solely for the person to whom it was given by the health care team

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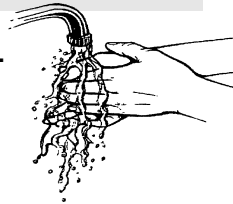
MARY PACK ARTHRITIS PROGRAM
Vancouver Hospital & Health Sciences Centre

What to Have Ready:

- ◆ Vial (small bottle) of medication
- ◆ Sterile disposable syringe and needle
- ◆ Sample syringe marked with the prescribed dose
- ◆ Alcohol swabs
- ◆ Self-injection record
- ◆ Hard plastic container to dispose of used needle/syringe

Preparing for your Injection:

- ◆ Wash your hands with soap and water.
- ◆ Gather all the items you need and take them to a table.
- ◆ Sit down in a chair next to the table.



Clean Up:

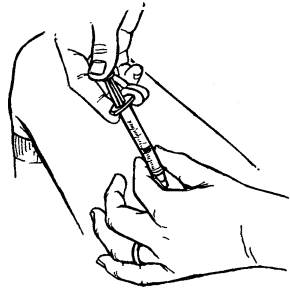
Put used drug containers, syringes and needles in a resealable container from the pharmacy. Check with your pharmacist for special disposal instructions.

Record:

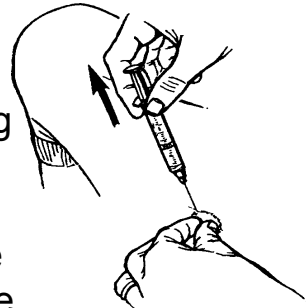
After each injection:

- ◆ record the date
- ◆ site of injection
- ◆ medication dose

- ◆ Use your non-dominant (weaker) hand to slowly push down on the plunger to inject the medication.

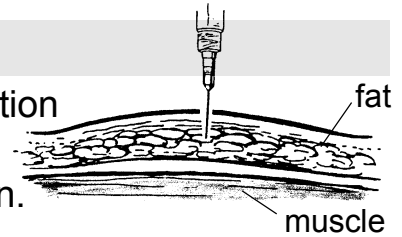


- ◆ Put the alcohol swab on your skin near the needle and quickly pull the needle out. You may have slight bleeding from the site. This usually means you have broken a small blood vessel under the skin. Press gently on the site.



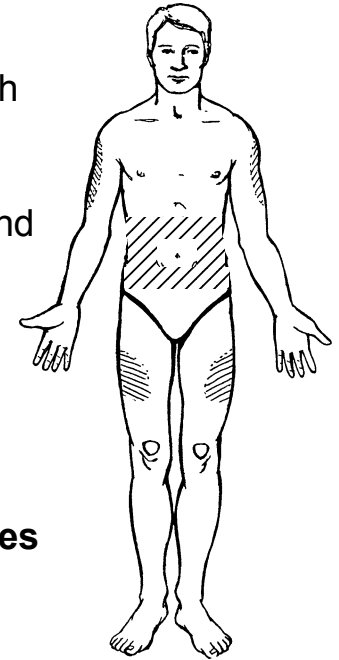
Injection Sites:

- ◆ A subcutaneous (SC) injection deposits medication into the fat tissue below the skin.
- ◆ You can inject into the:
 - abdomen (except for one inch around the navel)
 - upper outer area of arms,
 - upper outer area of thighs, and
 - upper hip area.



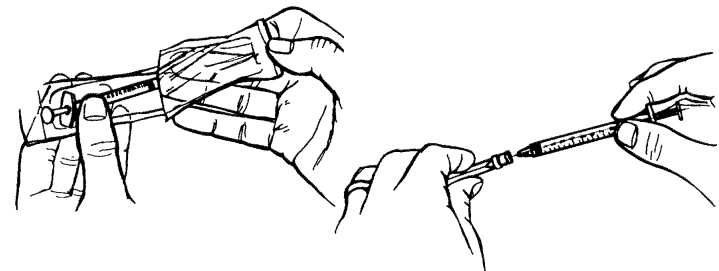
A family member or caregiver can also learn this technique.

It is important that you change injection sites. The new site should be at least 1-2 inches away from the last site.



Filling the Syringe

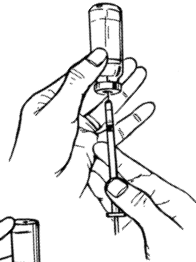
- ◆ Mix the contents of the vial thoroughly. Unwrap the needle and syringe and join them.



- ◆ Clean the rubber stopper of the vial with an alcohol swab.

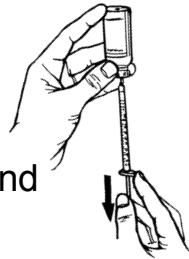


- ◆ With the vial upright, put the needle into the rubber stopper and inject air into the vial.

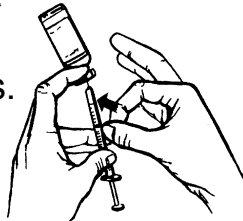


Turn the vial upside down.

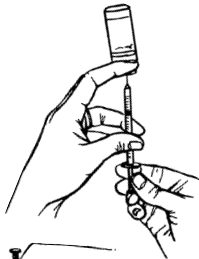
Pull back the plunger to beyond the prescribed dose level. Make sure the end of the needle is in the liquid.



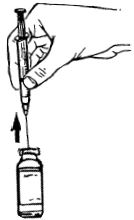
- ◆ "Flick" the syringe to remove air bubbles.



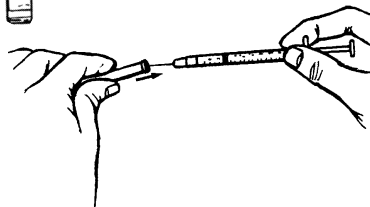
- ◆ Move the plunger to the prescribed dose level on the syringe.



- ◆ Turn the vial upright and remove the needle.

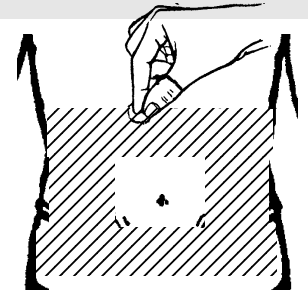


- ◆ Put the needle cover back on the needle.



Cleaning the Injection Site:

- ◆ Wipe the site with a clean alcohol swab.
- ◆ Place the swab on a clean surface to use again later, when you are withdrawing the needle.

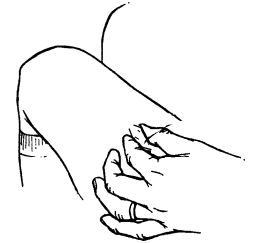


Subcutaneous (SC) Self-Injection:

- ◆ Remove the needle cover. Hold the syringe with the needle up and push the plunger just slightly so that you can see a drop of liquid at the needle.



- ◆ Pinch your skin and fat tissue with your non-dominant (weaker) hand.



- ◆ Hold the syringe in your dominant (stronger) hand, as if holding a pencil, one inch above the injection site at a 90 degree angle to the skin. Dart (stab) the needle through the skin into the fat tissue.

