



HOW TO SAFELY AND EFFECTIVELY SELF-INJECT AN INTRAMUSCULAR INJECTION

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STEP 1

Organise your medications and injection equipment onto a flat, clean working surface

1. This will ensure you have everything ready in front of you. You will typically need:

- 1 x syringe (often 1ml)
- 1 x vial of medication
- 1 x drawing/filling needle (18G, 21G or 23G)
- 1 x injecting needle (23G/25G/27G) depending on the thickness or viscosity of the medication you are injecting and the location of the injection. Occasionally, the same needle may be used for filling and injecting eg. 23G
- 1-2 x alcohol wipes
- Sharps bin (for disposal of needles/syringes;
- available at most pharmacies)

2. Check the expiration date on the vial of medication. Do not use medication with particles, medication that is discoloured or has expired.

3. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap, and dry completely. Hand washing is one of the most important steps to preventing infection.

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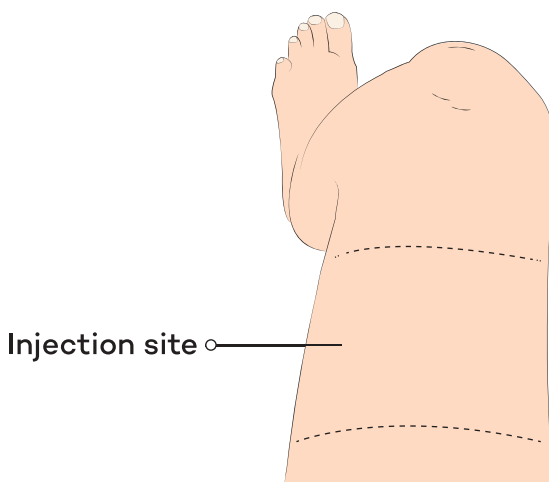
STEP 2

Where to inject medications for intramuscular administration?

Option 1. (Recommended for self-injection) – Vastus lateralis muscle in the thigh:

This injection site is recommended for self-administering an IM injection as most find it easier to see and administer the injection because it is in front of them rather than to the side/back. Look at your thigh and divide it horizontally into 3 equal parts. The injection will go into the outer middle third. At the ends before the knee bends and aim the injection right above the V in the centre of the thigh.

Vastus lateralis

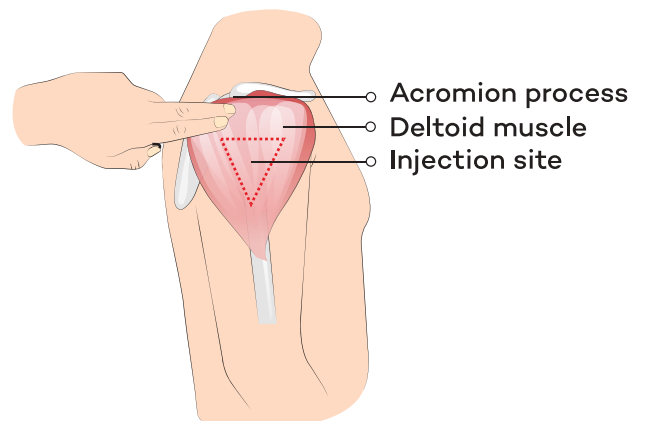


Option 2. (Recommended if a caregiver is providing the injection) – Deltoid muscle in the arm:

The deltoid muscle is generally used when the volume of medication is small - typically no more than 1 millilitre.

As this site can be difficult to use for self-injection, a caregiver, friend, or family member can assist with injections into this muscle.

To locate this site, feel for the bone (acromion process) that's located at the top of the upper arm. The correct area to give the injection is two finger widths below the acromion process. At the bottom of the two fingers will be an upside-down triangle. Give the injection in the center of the triangle.



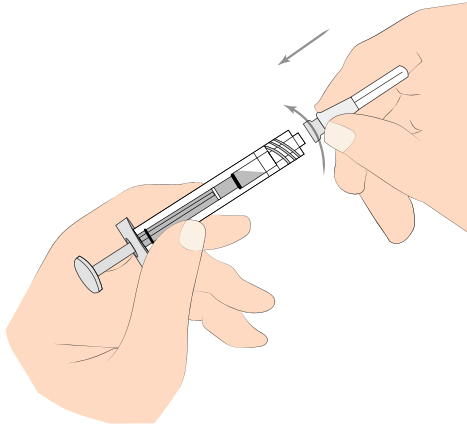


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STEP 3

Preparing the Injection Dose

1. Open the syringe package followed by the drawing/filling needle package (18G; occasionally 21G or 23G) carefully taking care not to touch the open end of the needle against anything, including your hands. Screw the drawing/filling needle onto the end of the syringe.



2. Remove the coloured cap on the top of the vial and place the vial on your flat working surface. Wipe across the top of the vial with one side of an alcohol swab and use the other side to swab the skin of the injection site.

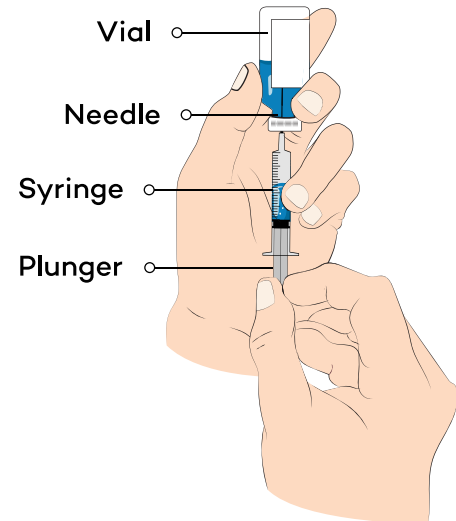


3. Pull the needle cover straight off the needle. Do not let the needle touch any surfaces.

4. Insert the needle straight down through the centre of the rubber top of the vial at a 90 degree angle to the vial.

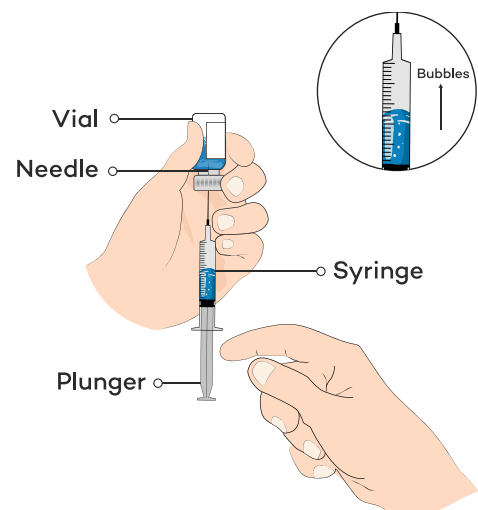
5. Turn the vial upside down. Ensure the needle tip is always covered with the medication to avoid drawing air into the syringe.

6. Slowly pull back on the plunger to fill the syringe with the medication to the number (ml or units) that matches the dose your doctor has prescribed.



7. Withdraw the needle from the vial and 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.

Pull back on the plunger slightly, then push the plunger up to remove air. Take care not to touch the needle with your fingers or against any surfaces.



8. Switch the fill needle to an injection needle if your prescriber/clinic has provided this instruction. Leave the needle cover on until you are ready to give the injection.

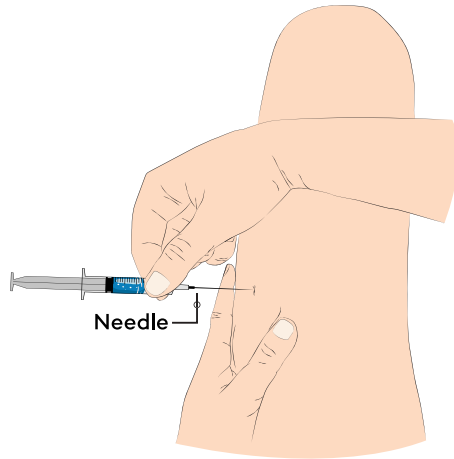


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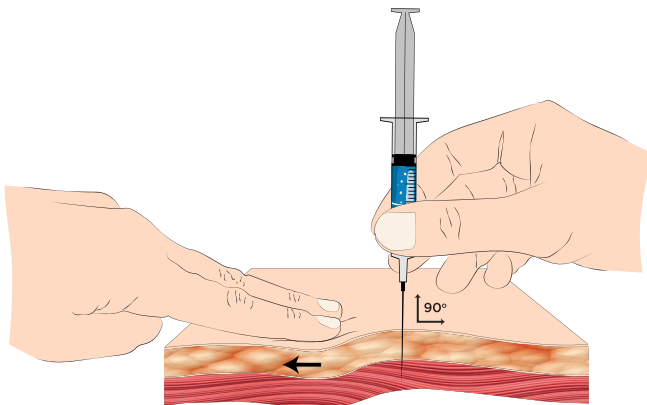
STEP 4

Give the Intramuscular Injection

1. Gently hold the skin around the injection site so that the skin is slightly taut.



2. Insert the IM needle into the muscle at a 90 degree angle with one quick and firm motion.



3. After inserting the needle into the muscle, take your hand off the skin.

4. You can complete the injection by pushing the medication slowly into the muscle. You may feel some mild pressure as the medicine enters your muscle.

5. When you finish injecting the full dose of the medication into the muscle, remove the needle slowly and at the same right angle that you inserted the needle. Sometimes you might see a small drop of blood at the injection site, this is normal and nothing to be alarmed about.

6. Gently press an alcohol swab on the testosterone injection site. Hold pressure on site until there is no bleeding. You can place a band aid on the injection site if needed.

Tips for Reducing Intramuscular Injection Pain

- Inject medicine that is at room temperature.
- Remove all air bubbles from the syringe before injection.
- Let the skin dry after using alcohol wipes before injecting.
- Keep the muscles in the injection area relaxed.
- Break through the skin quickly with the needle.
- Don't change the direction of the needle as it goes in or comes out.
- Do not reuse disposable needles.

Instructions for Disposing of 'Sharps':

Improper disposal of syringes and other sharp objects can pose a health risk and damage the environment. Please always dispose of your used syringes and needles using a sharps bin.