

How to use a needle and syringe



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1. Clean your hands.

Take off your watch and all rings.

To wash your hands:

- Wash your hands with soap and water for 1 minute.
- Rinse well.
- Dry hands with paper towels or a clean towel.
- Use the paper towel or towel to turn off the tap.

Or, use an alcohol based hand sanitizer.

2. Gather your supplies.

- 1 Chlorhexidine/alcohol swab
- Vial of medicine
- ___ mL syringe with a ___ inch needle
- Sharps container for needles

Sharps safety

When you finish with your needle and syringe, put them into a sharps container.

Your **sharps container** can be:

- A special container for sharps,
- A coffee can with a cover, or
- A plastic detergent bottle with a lid.

You can get a sharps container from your pharmacy. When it is full:

- Seal the container
- Mark it 'Household sharps'
- Call your garbage collection company, pharmacy, or clinic to know how to safely discard the container. Do not put it in your household garbage.

Do NOT reuse needles or syringes.

Do NOT throw needles right into the garbage.

3. Check your vial.

Check the date. If the medicine has expired, use a new vial.

Check the medicine. If it has changed colour, or has flakes or lumps, discard it. Use a new vial.

3. Get the medicine ready.

If the vial is cold, warm it by holding it in your hand. Or, let it stand at room temperature for one hour.



If you need to mix the medicine, roll the vial in your hands. Do not shake the vial.

5. Snap off the plastic cover.

If this is the first time you are using the vial, snap off the cover. Do not remove the stopper.

6. Scrub the stopper with a chlorhexidine/alcohol swab.

Let it dry.

7. Get the syringe ready.

Pull the plunger back to the line that marks the dose you need to give. This will bring air into the syringe.

8. Put the correct dose of medicine into the syringe. To do this:

- Carefully remove the needle cover. Do not touch the needle.
- Put the needle through the stopper and push the air into the vial.
- Turn the vial upside down. Pull the needle down so only the tip pokes through the stopper. This will let you withdraw medicine without getting air.
- Pull back on the plunger and let the medicine flow into the syringe until it reaches the amount to be given.



10. Remove the needle from the vial.

If you must put the syringe down, put the needle cover on first. Do not let the needle touch anything.

9. Check the syringe for air bubbles.

Air bubbles will not hurt your child. But, large air bubbles will reduce the dose your child receives.

To remove air bubbles, keep the needle in the vial, and:

- Gently push the medicine back into the vial. Measure the dose again.
Or,
- Tap the syringe to make the bubble rise to the top. Hold your syringe and vial tightly so the needle will not bend. Squirt the bubble into the vial. Measure the dose again.

At Children's & Women's Health Centre of British Columbia we believe parents are partners on the health care team. We want you to be as informed as possible.

This pamphlet will answer some of your questions. Please ask questions and share your concerns.