

Choosing an injection site:

Safest

Arms- first upper, then lower is

Hands- less safe than arms because veins and nerves. Circulation is also slower making it longer to heal.

Try to avoid

Legs- because they can form blood clots.

Feet- the veins in your feet are fragile. Give these places extra time to heal.

Breasts- This can cause blood clots and can cause pain and swelling.

Dangerous

Wrist- This area is very close to your arteries and nerves.

Neck- most dangerous because its so close to main arteries which could kill you if you hit one of these.

Groin- very close to an artery which like the neck can be fatal if hit. If you get a bruise after you inject here, get medically attention right away.

Penis- Injecting here leaves a high chance of infection.

Tips for choosing a vein:

- The larger and more visible the vein, the easier and safest it will be
- Veins are PULSELESS- you want to make sure you cannot feel a pulse
- NEVER inject into an artery
- Rotating sites will keep your veins healthy.
- Try to keep a good vein available at all times encase of medical emergencies.
- Areas furthest away from the heart, like the hands and feet take the longest to heal due to lower circulation.

Choosing a safer injection site



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SAFER INJECTING



Meeting people where they're at.

Needle Tips

One shot- one needle: Needle tips can dull very easily, and bacteria can grow quickly resulting in risk for infections. You want to make sure you use one needle per hit, and discard then into a puncture proof container. Sharpening your own needles is very dangerous, as it can weaken the tip, and could break off in your vein.

Do not clean equipment that is sterile, sterile is as clean as you can get it, and 'cleaning' it could actually contaminate it.

Preparing your shot: prepping your shot as clean as you can will help decrease bacteria from entering your veins. You want to use new supplies every time as it will decrease the risk of bacteria entering your blood. If you do not have access to new supplies make sure yours are thoroughly cleaned.

What to do if you have hit an artery

- Untie your tourniquet and pull your needle out immediately.
- Apply direct pressure for at least 10 minutes
- Raise your limb above your head to stop the bleeding
- If bleeding continues- apply a cloth wrapped very tightly around the area and seek medical attention

Tips for getting veins up

- Apply a tourniquet above the injection site
- Lightly slap the area
- Apply a warm compress to the site for five or ten minutes
- Lower your arm below your heart or swing it in a circle

Mixing your shot

Cookers: used to dissolve or 'cook up' powdered and solid drugs for injection.

Cotton: the filter acts to keep particles out of your system. Q-tip, or a small piece of tampons are safe alternatives. **Do not use cigarette filters due to traces of smoke and other chemicals .**

Mixing and Rinse Water: Sterile water dissolves drugs and flushes out your rigs. *It is important to not use sterile saline (salt water) because drugs may not dissolve in it.*

Tourniquets: people using needles need something to tie off on their arm to restrict blood flow, allowing them to hit the vein easier. Never leave the tie on too long, as it could cause your circulation to get cut off.

Heat: if you are using heroin, crack, or fentanyl, you will need something such as a lighter to heat down your drugs

Alcohol prep pads: Used to clean the area you are injecting at. *This step is very important because it will prevent bacteria from entering the blood stream, which ultimately will decrease your risk for infection.*

Cooking your shot: Powdered drugs must be dissolved into a liquid form before they can be injected. If you are using something already in a liquid form, such as morphine, you will not need to cook them down. Vitamin C helps break down drugs if required; use a pinch amount to put in your spoon that will help the drugs dissolve better. Never use lemon juice, it can cause an infection. If you are using pills, crush them up as finely as you can and then dissolve them for use.

Don't recook a shot with a lot of blood in it, as the blood could coagulate (turn solid) and clog your rig.

Injecting

Rotate your injection sites; this will help them stay healthy.

It is extremely important for those who inject drugs know how to fix it themselves and not rely on someone to safeguard from abuse. If you do not know how, you can find some tips in this package, or ask a trusted friend who uses to show you.

Mainlining: injecting a substance directly into the vein has the highest risk of overdose, because drugs are dumped directly into bloodstream at once.

Inserting your needle: you want to insert the needle, bevel up, at a 15-35 degree angle and always in the direction of the heart.

Checking: once you think you have hit a vein, you can draw the plunger back a bit to see if you get a return blood flow. If the blood is dark red, that means you have hit the vein, and this is good! At this point you can untie your tourniquet and inject your drugs. If you inject and are not in your vein, the drugs are injected under the skin which can lead to pain and swelling; the effects of the drugs felt more slowly. This is called a miss shot and puts you at an increased risk for abscess.

Removing: After you have successfully injected your drugs, carefully pull the syringe out and apply pressure to the injection site. Then dispose of the needle into a puncture proof container.

