

How to Give Subcutaneous (SubQ) Injection

Some medications work best when they are given into subcutaneous (fat) tissue. Subcutaneous means 'under the skin' and giving medicine here is also called a 'SubQ' injection (shot). You will use a syringe and needle to inject (put in) the medicine.

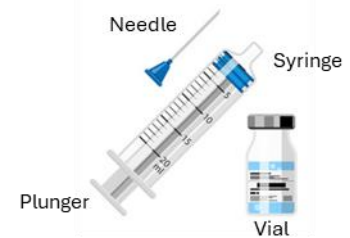
Scan the code to the right watch a video on subcutaneous injections.

Your Dose: _____ mL



Gather Your Supplies

- Medicine
- Alcohol pad or rubbing alcohol and cotton ball
- Larger needle (usually 18-gauge) or plastic cannula (small, soft tube) for drawing up medicine
- 1mL syringe
- 25-gauge x 5/8-inch needle for injecting
- Cotton ball or gauze pad
- Band-Aid, if needed
- Sharps container (hard container used to safely throw away sharp objects like needles)



Draw up the Medicine

- Clean your work surface using antibacterial wipes or soap and water. Let it air dry.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds. Use a clean paper towel to dry them.
- Wipe the rubber top of the vial with alcohol for 20 seconds. Allow to dry for 10 seconds.
- Twist the larger needle or plastic cannula onto the syringe.
- Pull the plunger back to fill the syringe with air. The amount of air should be the same as your injection dose.
- Remove the cap from the needle.
- With the vial still on the work surface, hold it firmly and insert the needle in the vial.
- Push the plunger in and inject (push) the air into the vial.

- Pick up the vial and turn it upside down with the syringe and needle still attached to the vial.



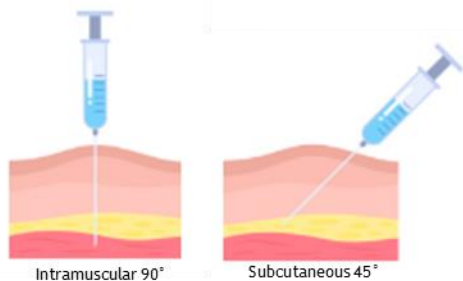
- Pull the plunger back down and fill the syringe with your medicine.
- Make sure there are no air bubbles in the syringe. Tap the syringe to get air bubbles to the top then push all the air back into the vial. Pull the medicine back into the syringe until you get your dose. Repeat as needed.
- Gently pull the needle out of the vial and put the cap back on.
- Twist off the larger needle or plastic cannula and twist on a 25-gauge x 5/8-inch needle.

Inject the Medicine

- Choose an injection site and clean it with alcohol for 20 seconds. Let the skin dry for 10 seconds. Do not blow or wave dry.
- Remove the cap from the needle and hold the syringe with your dominant hand or the hand you are most comfortable using for small tasks.
- With your other hand, lightly pinch about one inch of skin up with your thumb and index finger.



- Insert the needle into the skin at a 45- or 90-degree angle.

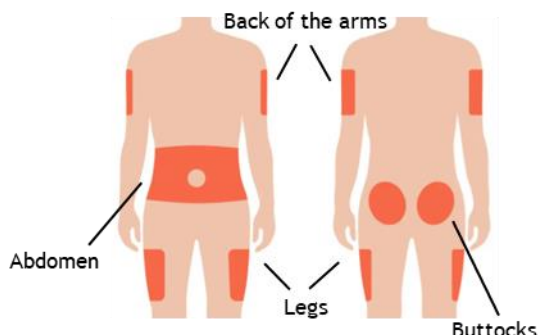


- Push the plunger in to inject all the medicine.
- Keep the needle in for a few seconds.
- Let go of the pinched skin.
- Remove the needle.

- A few drops of blood or medicine might come out of the skin. This is normal. Wipe them away if they appear.
- Place a Band-aid if needed.
- Throw away syringe and needle in sharps container.

Prevent Scarring and Pain

- Switch between or change injection sites with each dose.
- Don't inject areas that are bruised, scarred, swollen, or tender.
- Don't rub the injection site.



Dispose your Sharps Container Appropriately

- Don't forget: When your sharps container is $\frac{3}{4}$ full, dispose of it. It is against the law to throw sharps in household trash.
- Visit <https://sharpstakebackcalifornia.org/> to have a sharps container shipped to your home for free.
- Visit <https://dpw.lacounty.gov/epd/hhw/Sharps> to learn which containers you can use and how to get free sharps containers.
- Visit <https://safeneedledisposal.org/states/california/> to search for disposal sites near you.