

# How to Give an Intramuscular (IM) Injection

Some medications work best when given intramuscularly. Intramuscular means “into the muscle”. A syringe and needle are used to inject (put in) the medication into the muscle. Where you inject the medication will depend on your child’s age and size. Your child’s nurse or doctor will show you the best places on your child’s body to give the medication.

## Before you prepare for the injection:

1. Wash your hands with soap and water for 30 seconds. Dry them well with a clean paper towel.
2. Clean your work surface using antibacterial wipes, vinegar, soap and water or alcohol pads. Let it air dry.
  - a. We recommend using a non-porous work surface (example: new plastic cutting board or metal tray)
3. Gather the supplies you need and place them on a clean surface.
  - Alcohol prep pad
  - Medication
  - Cotton ball or gauze
  - Tape or bandaid
  - Needle (if syringe does not have needle attached)
  - Syringe
  - Sharps container
4. Check medication for name, drug, dosage, and expiration date. Do not use if expired.

## How To Give the Injection:

**Step 1:** Use an alcohol prep pad to clean the area you have chosen for your child’s injection (poke). Clean well for 20 seconds, and let it air dry for 10 seconds. Do NOT blow on it.

**Step 2:** Remove the cap from the needle and hold the syringe like a pen or a dart with your dominant (stronger) hand. DO NOT touch the needle.

**Step 3:** Lightly pinch about 1 inch of your child’s skin with your other hand.

**Step 4:** Quickly insert the needle into the skin at a 90-degree angle.

**Step 5:** Push down on the plunger to inject all of the medication. This should be done with the same hand holding the syringe.

**Step 6:** Let go of your child’s skin and remove the needle. Put light pressure on the injection area with a cotton ball or gauze. Do NOT put the cap back on the needle. This prevents accidentally poking yourself with the needle.

**Step 7:** Throw away the syringe and needle in your Sharps container. Do NOT throw them away in your regular trash or recycling bins.

**Step 8:** Use tape or a bandaid on the injection site, if needed.

