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How to Administer Human Chorionic Gonadotropin (hCG)

Among the various medications used in fertility treatments, human chorionic gonadotropin (hCG) plays a crucial role. It is available in its generic form or under brand names like Novarel. Another brand, Ovidrel, is administered differently. This guide provides instructions for administering generic hCG or Novarel. For Ovidrel, please refer to the second part of this handout.

Generic hCG or Novarel Injection: Supplies Needed

- Vial of hCG powder and vial of diluent
- 3 cc syringe
- 22-gauge, 1½ inch needle (black hub) for mixing
- 25-gauge, 1½ inch needle (blue hub) for injection
- Alcohol wipes
- 2x2 gauze
- Red, plastic, biohazard container
- Band-Aid

Preparing the Medication:

hCG is provided in vials containing 10,000 International Units (IU). Each package includes a vial of sterile liquid solution (diluent) and a vial of powdered medication, which appears as white, clumped powder.

- Work in a clean area, such as a bathroom or kitchen counter.
- Clean the surface thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol.
- Wash your hands.
- Remove the flip seals from both the medicine and diluent vials.
- Using the 22-gauge needle on the 3 cc syringe, draw 1 cc of air into the syringe. Pierce the rubber top of the diluent vial, inject the air, invert the vial, and draw 1 cc of diluent into the syringe.
- Remove the syringe from the diluent vial and inject the diluent into the hCG vial. Then, gently roll the hCG vial to dissolve the powder.
- Draw 1 cc of air into the syringe, inject it into the hCG vial, invert the vial, and withdraw the entire contents into the syringe.

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Preparing for Injection:

- Pull the plunger back $\frac{1}{2}$ cc to clear the medication from the needle. Cap the needle and replace it with a 25-gauge, 1½ inch needle (blue hub).
- If air bubbles are present, tap the syringe gently to move them to the top, then push the plunger until one or two drops of liquid are expelled. Recap the needle.

Injecting hCG:

The hCG injection should be administered at the exact time and dosage prescribed, as this is critical for the timing of your fertility treatment.

- Choose an injection site, preferably the gluteal muscle (buttocks) or the thigh muscle. Avoid areas with tenderness, swelling, scarring, or irritation.
- Wipe the injection site with an alcohol wipe.
- Stretch the skin at the injection site and insert the needle at a 90° angle, almost up to the hub, in a smooth, dart-like motion.
- Stabilize the needle and syringe, then pull back on the plunger to check for blood. If blood is present, remove the needle, apply pressure to the site with gauze, and select a new site. If no blood is seen, slowly depress the plunger to inject the medication.
- After injecting, release the skin, remove the needle, discard it into your biohazard container, and apply gauze to the injection site. If bleeding occurs, apply gentle pressure, and then cover with a Band-Aid.

Ovidrel Injection: Supplies Needed

- Pre-mixed Ovidrel syringe with needle attached
- Alcohol wipes
- Red, plastic, biohazard container
- Band-Aid

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Injecting Ovidrel:

Ovidrel comes pre-mixed in a syringe with the correct needle already attached. It is dispensed in a single dosage (250 mcg) and cannot be split into half doses. The medication should be clear with no visible clumps or particles.

- Wash your hands.
- Wipe the injection site (lower abdominal area) with an alcohol swab and let it air dry.
- Pinch a fold of skin at the injection site, then insert the needle to the hub.
- Release the skin and slowly depress the plunger until all the medication is injected.
- Remove the needle, discard it in your biohazard container, and gently rub the injection site with an alcohol swab for 30 seconds. If bleeding occurs, apply gentle pressure for 2 minutes, then cover with a Band-Aid.

Note: This guide is for reference only. Ensure you schedule a hands-on injection class before starting treatment.