



February 2023

Guide for Self-Administration of Subcutaneous Injections

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Following these steps can help you feel more confident to safely inject your medication. You can do it!

Step 1: Control your environment

- Find a quiet, clean area that will allow you to focus and be free of distractions

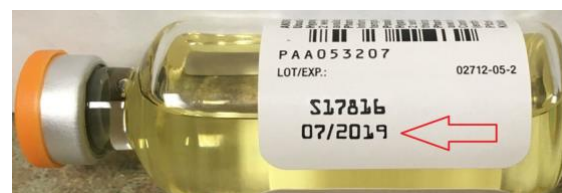
Step 2: Know your rights!

⇒ **Review the 5 medication rights before every injection:**

- Right person
- Right medication
- Right dose
- Right route
- Right time

Inspect the medication vial:

- Expiry date
- Colour, no floaters



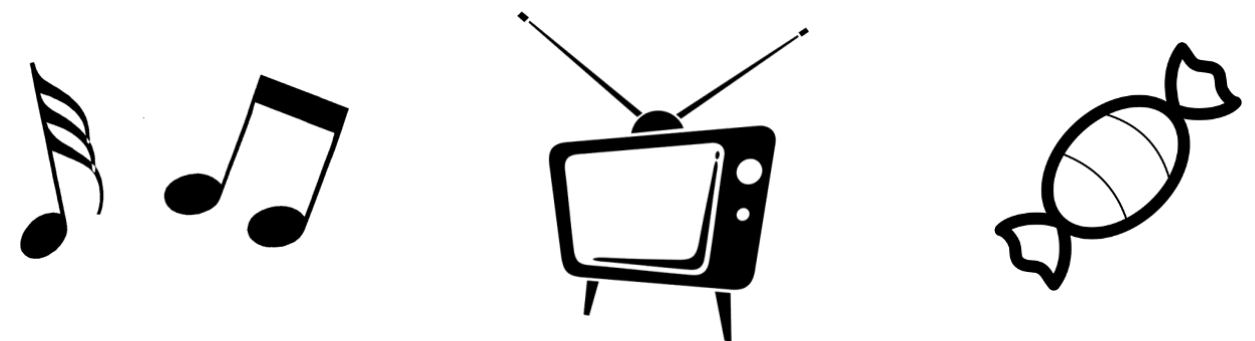
Stay organized!

Use a cellphone or a calendar to remind yourself of your **injection date** and **injection site**. Setting up an alarm can also help you remember.



Tips and Tricks!

- If you are experiencing anxiety that is making it difficult to give yourself your injection, you may want to try one of the following:
 - Distraction: put on your favourite song or a tv show
 - Support: have a support person sit with you during your injection
 - Reward: reward yourself after your injection



Where to buy injection supplies:

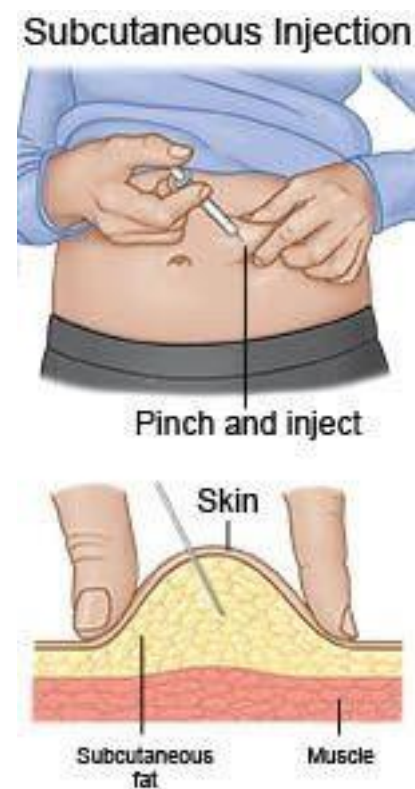
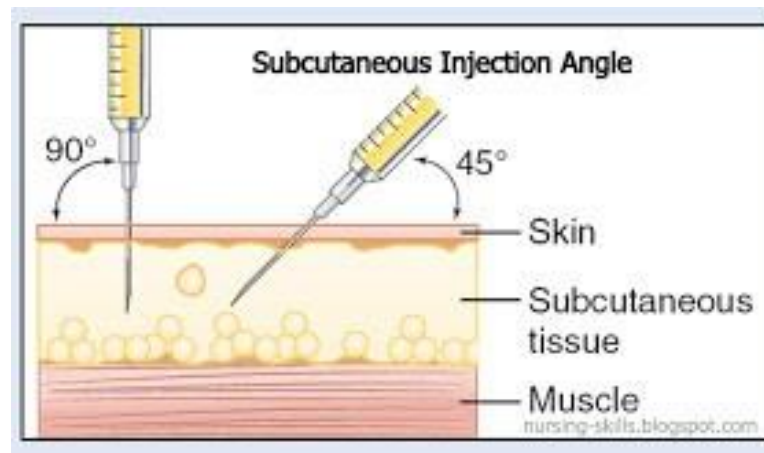
- Swift Compounding Pharmacy: 276 Bank St., Ottawa (613) 422-2202
- Ontario Medical Supply (OMS): 1100 Algoma Rd. Ottawa 613-244-8620
- You may also be able to buy injection supplies at your local pharmacy.

Step 6: The injection

- Clean the skin in a circular motion with an alcohol swab. Let dry for 10 seconds.
- Remove the needle protector from your injection needle.

Subcutaneous:

- Gently pinch the skin & fatty tissue between thumb & index finger with non-dominant hand
- Insert needle in a steady motion and at a 45° or 90° angle
- Push the medication in and wait 10 seconds after injecting before withdrawing the needle. Note: medication is thick, so it can be hard to push the plunger.
- Withdraw needle and let go of your skin.
- Apply band aid if needed
- Dispose of needle in sharps container.



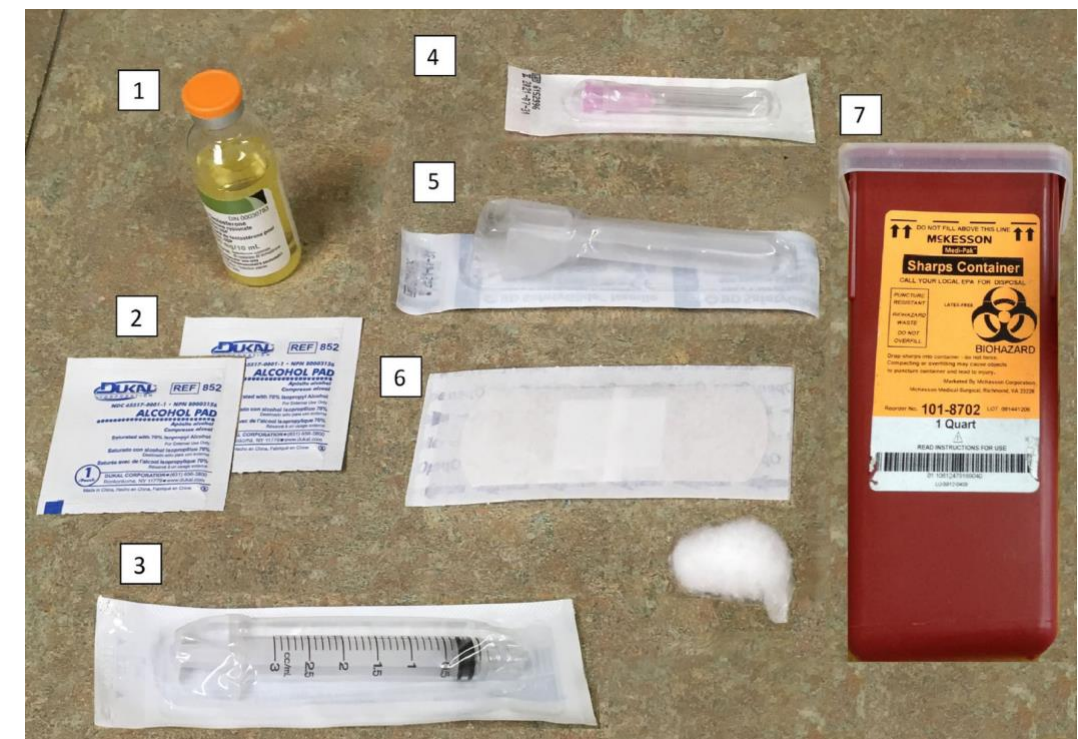
Step 3: Wash your hands

- Wash your hands with soap & water for 30 seconds
- Dry your hands

Step 4: Prepare your equipment

⇒ **Gather what you need:**

1. Medication vial
2. Alcohol swabs
3. Syringe: 1cc or 3cc depending on preference/dose
4. Drawing needle: 18G - 22G
5. Injecting needle:
 - Subcutaneous: 25G 5/8 inch needle
6. Band aid and cotton ball
7. Sharps disposal box



Wondering where to purchase supplies? See last page →

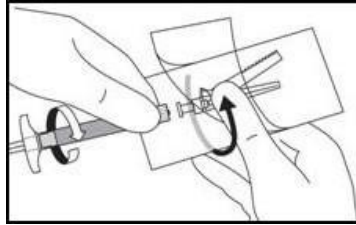
Step 4: Draw up the medication



STERILE

⇒ Prepare to draw:

- Clean the rubber stopper of the medication vial for 10 seconds with an alcohol swab. Let dry for 20 seconds.
- Open syringe & needle packages while keeping the tips sterile.
- Connect the drawing needle to the syringe, twisting in a clockwise motion.
- Remove needle protector.

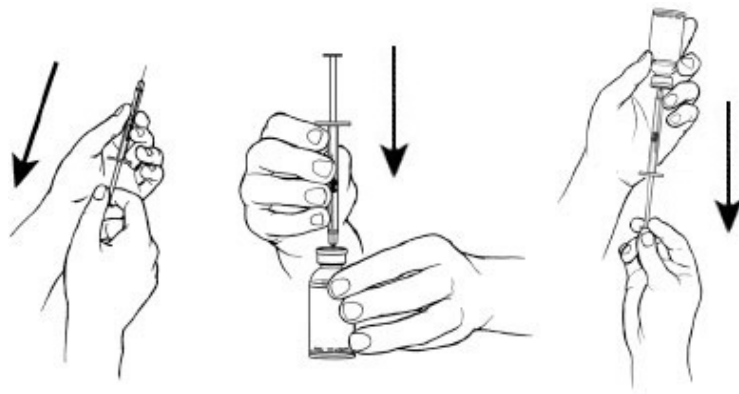


⇒ Draw the medication:

- Get some air in the syringe by pulling back on the plunger, equal to the amount of medication you will be injecting.
- Holding the vial steady on your clean surface, insert the needle by puncturing the rubber stopper of the vial, then push the air in.
- Flip the vial upside down while keeping the needle tip submerged, and pull back on plunger to withdraw the medication to your prescribed dose.



Tip: You want to avoid large air bubbles in your syringe. You can draw up more medication and push it back in, or gently tap the syringe to remove the bubbles.



- Remove drawing needle and place in sharps container.
- Attach the injection needle and gently push the medication up to the hub of the needle.

Step 5: Find your spot:

Subcutaneous

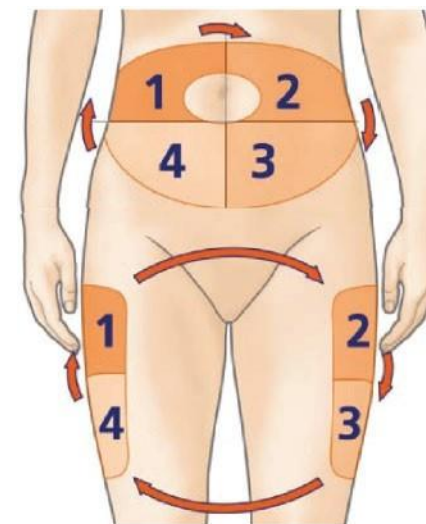
⇒ Abdomen

- Your injection site is in the fatty tissue of your abdomen, at least 1 inch away from your belly button, and anywhere between the bottom of your ribs & above your hips. You can inject while sitting down



⇒ Upper thigh

- Your injection site is in the fatty tissue in the middle to outer portion of your upper thigh. You can inject while sitting down



Remember:

- Always inspect the site prior to injecting. Avoid scar tissue. Watch for lumps, redness or swelling, bruises or irritation.
- Always **rotate sites** with each injection.