



HARM REDUCTION

SAFE
NEEDLE
Practice's
&
Techniques

Alternative Methods

(Other Than Injection)

- Sniffing: To inhale through the nose.
- Parachuting: To grind up, wrap in napkin/toilet paper, and swallow.
- Booty Bumping/Boofing: To administer through the rectum or anal cavity.
- Eye drops: To use an eye dropper, mix with water or saline. This method can also damage your eyes.
- Abstinence: To say no and refrain from using.

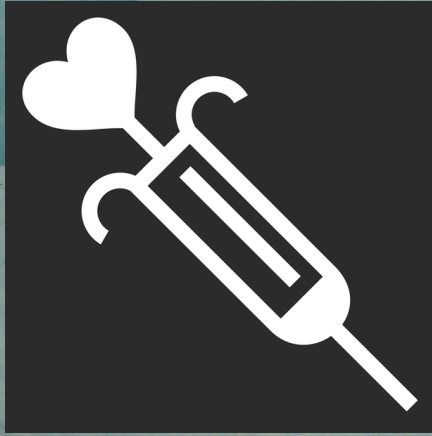
Safe Needle Practice's

- These are steps you or someone else can use to make sure you are safe. The more you practice these safe methods, the easier it will become. Before you know it, it will be like second nature.



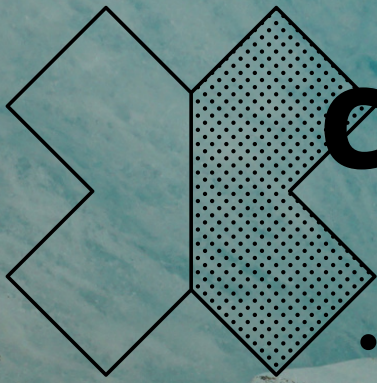


The Method



- Clean the area you will be using. Make sure it is a safe space.
- Gather your materials.
- Having a partner with you is always a good idea. This will prevent an overdose and save your life. If your alone or with someone always have naloxone/narcan on hand.





Continued....

-The works (supplies)

- Alcohol wipes
- Clean/new diabetic long or shortneedle(s)
- Tourniquet
- Cooker/Spoon
- Cotton (refrain from using cigarette filters)
- Band aid/cotton pad

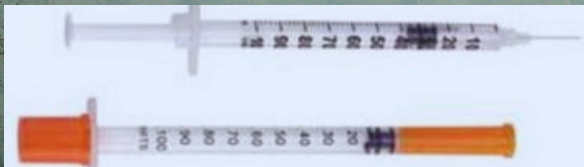
-Did you know....?

- **There are certain size preferences for new users and seasoned users. Why, you ask?**
- **Well, new users typically have less scarring, larger veins, and sometimes have an easier time accessing their veins. So a shorter needle size is needed. Whereas long term users have more scarring , bruising, and difficulty accessing veins. A longer needle is chosen for this individual.**

- There are mainly two size needles that are used for injection. We have dubbed these, "shorts" and "longs" but there are many sizes in between.
- The short needles, or, "shorts" are generally put together with a capacity=1ml, length=6mm, and 31 guage.



- The longer needles, or "longs" look something like this. Capacity= 1ml, Length= 12.7 mm, and 29 guage.



How do I find the right needle for me?

- For an individual who has been using injection as there main squeeze for five years or longer would prefer a longer size needle. Sometimes due to scarring of the injection site. Long term use can also cause your veins to collapse or sink deeper into your tissue. In the end it comes down to what you are comfortable with

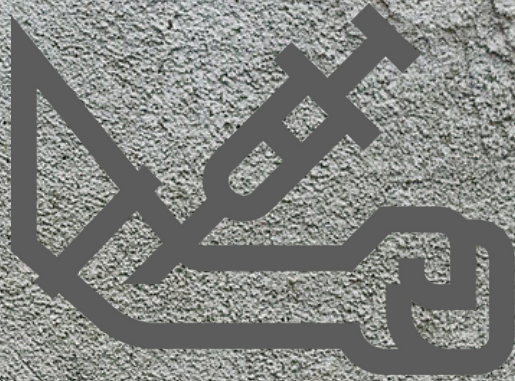
Safer Use

Techniques

- Remember to throw away your used needles after every use into a puncture proof container. You can get more syringes at your local pharmacy or needle exchange program.
- Switch up the areas you use to inject in. It will help prevent, "train tracks" or scarring from over use. Also by changing it up will help injection sites heal faster and increase the life of your veins!
- Never use a needle that has been used before. It is never a good idea to accept a needle from someone, unless you know it hasn't been tampered with.
- If you have no other option than to use an old needle please follow these recommendations. To sterilize a needle you must expose the needle to an excess of 350 degrees faranheit for an hour to kill off bacteria, fungi, and other microorganisms. This is reached by boiling a pot of water on the stove and putting the needle in the boiling water for a full hour!!

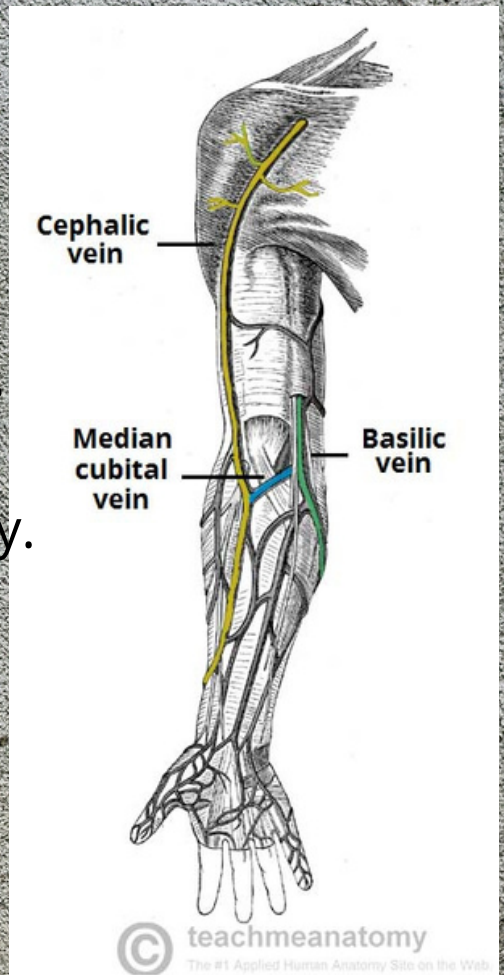
Best Places to Inject

- Inside of your arms
- Top of the hand
- The Forearm
- The Bicep



Inside of Elbow

- -Where: At the bend of the elbow. These are three veins you can use for injection.
- Median cubital vein:
Preferred vein to use for injection.
- -Basillic Vein: Lies close to brachial nerve and an artery.
- The basillic and cephalic veins are not preferred veins but can be used.
- -Cephalic Vein: Has the tendency to roll. Great care should be taken when anchoring vein.

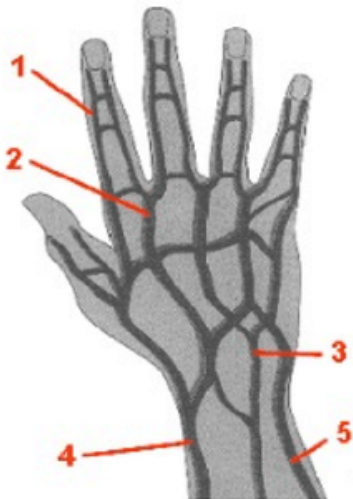


The Hand

- The hand can be used when a suitable arm vein can not be located or found.



- Where: The top of the hand has veins that can be used for injection. Be forewarned, this is a painful spot.



Veins of the Hand

1. Digital Dorsal veins
2. Dorsal Metacarpal veins
3. Dorsal venous network
4. Cephalic vein
5. Basilic vein

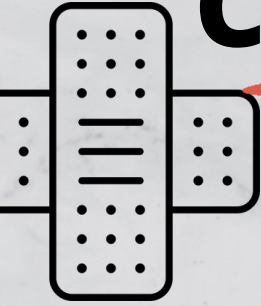
Higher Risk Injection Sites

- The neck
- The wrist
- The legs or feet




- The reason these places should generally be avoided is because there are arteries and nerves that can be easily hit by the needle. This can cause pain, blood loss, or nerve damage. In some cases medical treatment may be needed.

Continued...



- Occluded Veins: A blockage of a vein, for example; a blood clot.
- Multiple punctures of an injection site.
- Hematoma: Non-circulation of blood. Do not puncture hematoma. Use different area, if not possible, draw below hematoma.
- Area's with edema or fluid build-up underneath the skin. Impaired circulation will make it difficult to access a vein.
- Area's with extensive burns, scarring, and tattoos. These area's should be avoided due to a higher probability of infection.





What to do in case of...

-A missed vein-

- When you have the needle in the vein but you have gone through the vein or completely missed it. A good indication is no blood in the draw back. Take needle out, apply pressure, and try again.

-A Collapsed Vein-

- A collapsed vein is a blown vein that has caved in, which means that blood can no longer flow freely through that vein. Blood flow will resume once the swelling goes down, unless the collapse is severe enough the effects can be permanent.

-Muscle/Vein Spasm-

- A sudden, involuntary contraction of one or more muscles. This can happen from over exertion or lack of potassium. A vein Spasm is usually from hitting a nerve, which can be very painful. In either case, the needle has to be taken out. Locating another spot is a must. Using a warm compress will ease pain, be prepared to be sore in the injection area where the spasm occurred.



Tips

What can I do to find a vein?

- A warm compress can be very helpful in finding a vein. A small vein or non-existent vein will become larger and easier to see when heat is applied for a good 5 to 10 minutes. Wrapping your arm in a warm towel or submerging your arm in warm water is another way to find a vein.
- Staying hydrated is key to having bigger veins or making hard to access veins easier to see and use. Drink lots of water prior to injection.
 - Try making a fist and open your hand repeatedly. This will cause the blood to flow quicker into your arm and make visibility easier.
- Palpatate your arm for a vein, most veins are not visible to the naked eye. Using touch may be the only way to find a problematic vein. Make sure it is a vein and not an artery.
 - Take a break! Relax for 10 to 15 minutes and try again. Sometimes time is the only thing that can help.

Increased Risks of Injecting

- Skin and soft tissue infections (SSTI): bacterial invasion that compromises the skins defenses and microbial therein
- HIV/AIDS: An autoimmune disease that can be contracted by sharing needles and not adhering to safe needle practice
- Hepatitis C: A virus that attacks the liver and leads to inflammation. This can also be contracted by unsafe needle practices.
- Overdose: An excessive and dangerous dose of a drug that leads to respiratory failure and death if narcan is not administered in time.
- Cotton Fever: An illness that happens to some individuals from injection. It's caused when bacteria or endotoxins from the cotton is injected into the body. The endotoxins are released into the blood stream causing fever, chills headache, nausea, muscle and joint pain.
- Abscesses: Is a SSTI, in which a swollen area within body tissue, contains an accumulation of pus or infection.


Continued.....

- Necrotizing Fasciitis: A serious bacterial infection that destroys tissue under the skin. This flesh-eating disease occurs when bacteria enters the body through a break in the skin.
- Infective Endocarditis: An infection caused by bacteria that has entered the blood stream and settled in the lining of the heart, heart valve, or a blood vessel.
- Blood Clots: Is a mass of blood that forms when platelets, proteins, and cells stick together in the blood. The clot can travel to the heart and lungs which can cause death.
- Hitting An Artery: By feeling in the bend of your arm by the cephalic vein you can feel your artery. Just like when you check your pulse. The artery pulses and if you happen to hit it while injecting, the force of the artery will drive the plunger back. The blood will appear light red, not dark like in a vein. The blood will also be foamy and you must withdraw the needle calmly and put as much pressure as you can. Seeking medical attention is a must. Especially if the bleeding does not stop and a hematoma occurs.

Benefits of Injection

- Efficient way to use. Absorbs directly into the blood stream.
- Leads to a more intense and longer high for the individual.
- Economically efficient and the individual will purchase less.





A Little Reminder.....

- Never use alone if you can help it! Always have narcans or naloxone with you at all times when using.
- If your injecting with a partner or friend, make sure to follow all safety practices to minimize an overdose, skin and soft tissue infections, and falling asleep on limbs.
- It is okay to say no if your uncomfortable with first-time injection. Do not let peer pressure dictate your decisions. Or because, "everyone is doing it," should not be a reason to start.
- There is nothing wrong or scary about learning how to inject yourself. Studies have shown an increase in sharing contaminated needles and unsafe needle practices when having a partner inject you.





Websites & Resources

GetMaineNaloxone.org

To find Naloxone (aka Narcan) in Maine
& Get Trained on how to administer it

Never Use Alone Hotline:

(New England)

800-972-0590 or **neverusealone.com**

Brave App:

Virtual Overdose Prevention in Your Pocket

Available for Android or Apple devices.

found on the Apple or Google Play Store.

For more information visit:

www.thebraveapp.com

