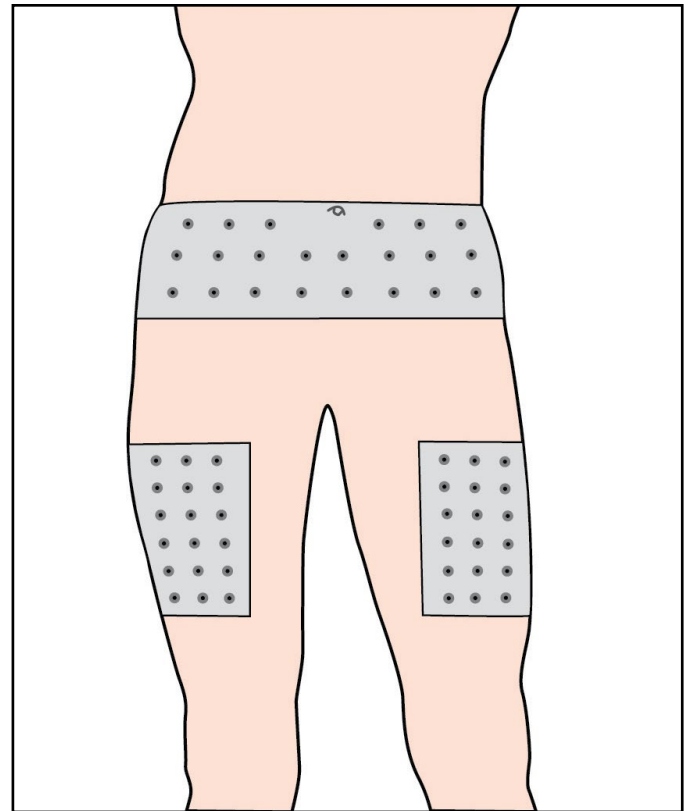


How To Give Subcutaneous Injections (Shots)

How to Give Subcutaneous (Under the Skin) Injections

Your lower abdomen, mid-thigh and upper arm are the best places to give subcutaneous injections. It is best to rotate where you give the shots to help decrease soreness and have the medicine absorb better.

- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Sit down and get comfortable.
- Choose an injection site (lower abdomen, upper arm or midthigh) as instructed by your health care provider.
- Carefully clean the injection site with an alcohol swab or a cotton ball and rubbing alcohol. Let the area air dry.
- Hold the syringe in your dominant hand. Use your other hand to gently grasp a fold of skin between your thumb and index finger. This ensures the medicine goes into the softer tissue and not the muscle.
- Hold the syringe with the small ½-inch needle the way you would a pencil. With a quick dart-like motion, insert the needle into the injection site.
- Press the plunger in a slow, steady motion until all the medicine is injected. Release the skin.



© Allina Health System

The areas of your abdomen and midthighs to give shots. Stay 1 inch away from your belly button and one hand-width away from your knees.

- Gently pull out the needle and throw away the needle and syringe into your sharps disposal container. Place gauze over the injection site. If there is bleeding, apply gentle pressure. Put a bandage over the injection site, as needed.

(over)

Getting Rid of Sharps

Properly throwing away used sharps (needles and lancets) is important to keep your family and community safe. This prevents adults, children and pets from finding and being harmed by them.

How to Store Your Sharps at Home

You will need to have a special container to store your used sharps at home. You can:

- buy a sharps disposal container from your pharmacy.
- make your own container. Visit [fda.gov](https://www.fda.gov) and type “sharps disposal container” into the search box for instructions.

When storing sharps at home, it is important to remember the following.

- Always keep your sharps storage container in a place where children and pets cannot reach it.
- Follow any directions from your county drop-off site or mail-back programs.

How to Get Rid of Your Sharps

When the container is $\frac{3}{4}$ full:

- return the sharps to your county drop-off site
- or
- send them to a mail-back program. You will have to pay for this.

Allina Health hospitals and clinics do not accept sharps. Do not bring them to your hospital or clinic.



Source: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Many pharmacies sell sharps containers.

Whom to Call With Questions

Call your city or county government’s household trash and recycling service with questions. You can also visit the following websites for more information.

- If you live in Minnesota, visit pca.state.mn.us.
- If you live in Wisconsin, visit dnr.wi.gov.

Information adapted from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Solid Waste Management Coordinating Board and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.