

How to Give Subcutaneous (Under the Skin) Testosterone Injections (Shots)

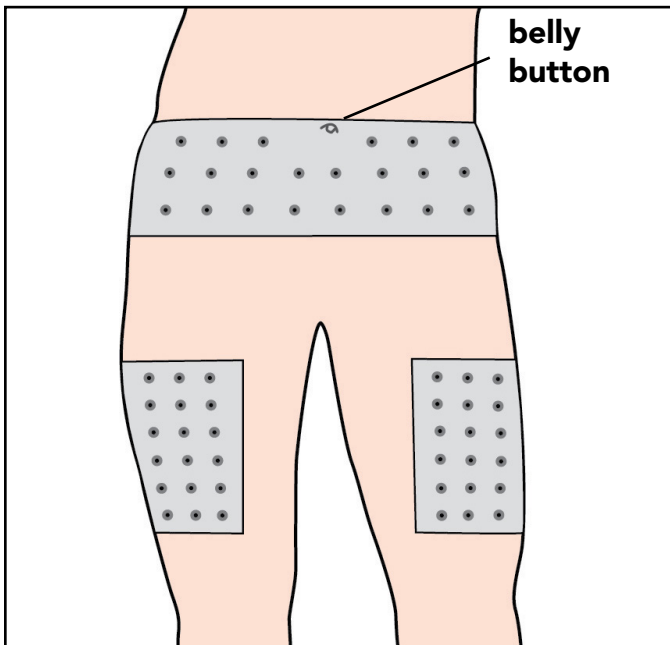
Subcutaneous Injections

You will need to give the testosterone injections (shots) into the fat layer below your skin. Rotating your injection sites will help prevent your skin from getting too irritated. Injection sites are:

- abdomen (belly)
- thighs
- back of the arms.

Follow your health care provider's schedule for when to give injections.

Keep a journal of your shots. Write down the date, time, injection site, and any reactions you have. (See page 4 for an example.)



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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.

Getting Ready for Your Injection

- Take your medicine out of the refrigerator. Look at the vial to make sure nothing is wrong.
 - Check to make sure the vial is not damaged.
 - Check the expiration date.
 - Look for anything floating in the vial.
 - Look for an odd color to the medicine.
 If you find something wrong, get a new vial and call your pharmacy.
- Let the vial warm up to room temperature (about 20 minutes).
- Gather your supplies:
 - syringe and needle
 - medicine vial
 - alcohol wipe or a cotton ball and rubbing alcohol
 - sharps container.
- You can apply an ice pack or gel pack on the injection site.
 - Put the pack in its sleeve or light towel before putting it on your skin.
 - Do this **before** you clean your skin with the alcohol.
- Wash your hands well with soap and water and dry them with a clean towel.

(over)

Preparing the Injection

1. Carefully clean the injection site with an alcohol swab or cotton ball and rubbing alcohol. Let the area air dry.
2. Take the cap off the vial.



3. Using friction, wipe the top of the vial.



4. Take the syringe out of its package.
5. Pull the plunger to draw air into the syringe. The amount of air should equal the amount of testosterone being drawn up. Take off the needle cover.

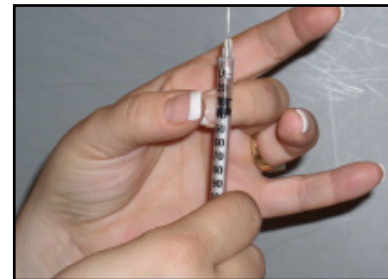


6. Put the vial on a counter or flat surface. Gently insert the syringe through the rubber stopper.

7. Hold the bottle and syringe in one hand. Keep the top of the needle in the bottle. Turn it upside down. You may need to adjust your needle to keep it in the solution. Use your other hand to move the plunger back to draw the dose into the syringe. Use the exact dose prescribed.



8. Check the syringe for air bubbles. Push the plunger up so the medicine goes back into the bottle. Redraw the dose. Tapping the syringe with your finger may help the air bubbles go to the top of the syringe. If bubbles stay at the top, push the plunger to remove bubbles.



9. Pull the bottle off the needle and check your dose. Cover the needle tip with the needle guard or put the syringe down on a sterile surface, like on a sterile gauze. Make sure the needle does not touch anything.



Giving the Injection

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.

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
2. Sit down and get comfortable.
3. Choose an injection site (lower abdomen, upper arm or midthigh) as instructed by your health care provider.
4. Carefully clean the injection site with an alcohol swab or a cotton ball and rubbing alcohol. Let the area air dry.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. Press the plunger in a slow, steady motion until all the medicine is injected. Release the skin.
8. 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.

What to Do if You Forget a Dose or Can't Take it as Scheduled

Use the best method for you to remember to give your scheduled injections: phone alarm, written or digital calendar, or bullet journal.

- If you forget or can't take a dose as scheduled, take it as soon as you can.
- Call your health care provider if it has been more than 2 days.
- **Do not double up on missed doses unless your health care provider tells you to do so.**

Traveling With Your Prescription

- Plan ahead for vacations. Call your pharmacy to refill your prescription, if needed.
- If you are flying:
 - Ask your health care provider for a letter confirming your need to carry syringes on board.
 - Pack all of your supplies in a carry-on bag.
- When you reach your destination, keep opened vials in a refrigerator.
 - If this isn't possible, pack extra vials and throw them away after each use.

Prescription Refills

- Use one pharmacy to get your refills.
- Have at least a 1-week supply of your medicine(s) before you need to order a refill.
- Allow extra time for refills if you use a mail order pharmacy.

When to Call Your Health Care Provider

Call your health care provider if you:

- develop a rash, redness, or inflammation (swelling) at the injection site
- have soreness that lasts more than a couple of days or is painful to the touch
- develop a fever of 101 F or higher after the injection
- have any questions.

Sharps Containers: What You Need to Know

Getting rid of sharps

Properly throwing away used sharps 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 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 directions.



Source: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

When storing sharps at home:

- Keep your sharps storage container in a place where children and pets can't 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 three-quarters (¾) full:

- take it to your county drop-off site **or**
- send it to a mail-back program (for a fee).

Allina Health clinics do not accept sharps. Do not bring them to your clinic.

Whom to call with questions

- Call your city or county government's household trash and recycling service to learn where to drop off your disposal container.
- Visit these websites to learn more:
 - Minnesota: visit pca.state.mn.us.
 - Wisconsin: visit dnr.wi.gov.

Track Your Injections

Keep a short journal of your injections. This will help you rotate your injection sites, stay on schedule, and note any reactions. Tell your health care provider if you are having any issues or concerns.

Date	Time	Site	Reaction
Aug. 6	6:30 p.m.	left arm	mild soreness
Aug. 7	6:45 p.m.	left thigh	mild redness and soreness
Aug. 8	6:35 p.m.	abdomen	mild redness
Aug. 9	6:30 p.m.	right arm	mild soreness
Aug. 10	6:30 p.m.	right thigh	mild soreness