



SUBCUTANEOUS INJECTION

Medications which are frequently given by subcutaneous injection include insulin, epogen, neupogen, interferons, GCSF, and Lovenox. The medication your physician has prescribed for you to be given subcutaneously is _____.

You should administer your subcutaneous injection where you have the most subcutaneous tissue. Generally the best sites to use are portions of your upper arms, upper thighs, the abdomen, hips and buttocks.

Before injecting your medication, be sure to inspect the skin you have chosen for redness, swelling or tenderness. If any of these conditions are present, choose another site. It is important that you rotate your injection sites to allow each site time to heal and absorb the medication. The chart below demonstrates the many choices you have in rotating your injection sites. Your nurse may ask you to write down your injection site each day to help you remember where to rotate for the next injection.

Injection Site Rotation Chart

Before You Begin

1. Wash hands thoroughly
2. Prepare your work area
3. Gather the following supplies:
 - Sterile syringe with needle & medication vial
 - Or pre-filled medication syringe
 - Alcohol wipes

Basic Steps

1. Prepare the medication.

2. Select the injection site using the Injection Site Rotation Chart. Remember to rotate the site as you have been instructed by your nurse. Swab the selected site with an alcohol swab, starting at the center of the site and wiping outward in a circular motion. Allow the site to dry.

3. Remove the needle cover, being careful not to touch or contaminate the exposed needle. Pinch your skin at the injection site between your thumb and forefinger.

4. Hold the syringe like a pencil in your dominant hand, and insert the needle at a 45-degree angle into the pinched skin with a quick, smooth motion. Your nurse may instruct you to change this angle depending on the amount of subcutaneous tissue available at the injection site.

5. Release the skin after the needle is inserted, and hold the syringe in place with one hand, pull back gently on the plunger with the other hand. Be careful not to pull the needle out of the skin. NOTE: If blood appears in the syringe, withdraw the needle and apply pressure to the injection site with a gauze pad. Discard the old needle and syringe into the SHARPS container and prepare a new needle and syringe, selecting another injection site.

6. If no blood is seen in the syringe, push the plunger in slowly until all medication has been injected.

7. Withdraw the needle and apply pressure to the injection site with the alcohol pad. Discard the used needle and syringe into the SHARPS container and wash hands.