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Proper Subcutaneous Injection Technique

Some medications work best when they are given as subcutaneous injections into the fatty layer under the skin. These medications need to be absorbed more slowly than others that are taken by mouth or injected into a vein. It is important to know how to draw and inject medications so that they can be given accurately, quickly, and with minimal discomfort.

What are the steps for giving a subcutaneous injection?

Step 1: Wash your hands with antibacterial soap.

Step 2: Check the expiration date of the medication. Do not use the medication if the expiration date has passed. Wipe the top of the vial with an alcohol swab.

Step 3: Carefully uncap the syringe by pulling straight off to avoid bending or touching the needle. Pull the plunger to let air into the syringe equal to the desired dose. Push the needle through the rubber top of the medication vial and push the air into the vial.

Step 4: Leave the needle in the vial and turn both upside down. Pull the plunger down slowly to draw the medication into the syringe to the desired dose.

Step 5: Check for air bubbles in the syringe. If air bubbles are present, gently tap the syringe or push the medication back into the vial and try again. When you have the right dose of medication drawn out and no air bubbles present, pull the syringe out of the vial.

Step 6: Select the injection site and clean with an alcohol swab using a circular motion from the center outward. Allow the alcohol to dry completely before injecting. Possible injection sites include thighs, buttocks, back of arms, or abdomen. If injecting into the abdomen, go an inch below and to the left or right of the navel.

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Step 7: Use the thumb and forefinger of one hand to pinch up the skin of the injection site. Use the other hand to hold the syringe like a pencil or dart. Push the needle straight into the skin at a 45° angle. Continue to hold the skin and push the plunger to inject the medicine while counting to 10 slowly. Release the pinch and pull the needle straight out from the skin at the same angle. Use a piece of gauze to cover the injection site with gentle pressure for a few seconds.

Step 8: Do not recap the needle. Dispose of the syringe safely in a sharps container. All other packaging, including medication vials, can be disposed of with your normal household garbage.

Will the injections hurt?

Subcutaneous injections can be painful, but there are ways to reduce this pain. One important factor in reducing pain is to rotate the site on the body where you give the injection. Possible injection sites include thighs, buttocks, back of arms, or abdomen. Use a different area of the body with each dose. **Use the chart on this page to record the date on the exact site of each dose.**

A cooling gel pack can be used to sooth the injection site before and after each injection.

If the needle bends while drawing up the medication, do not straighten it. Dispose of it and start with a new needle.

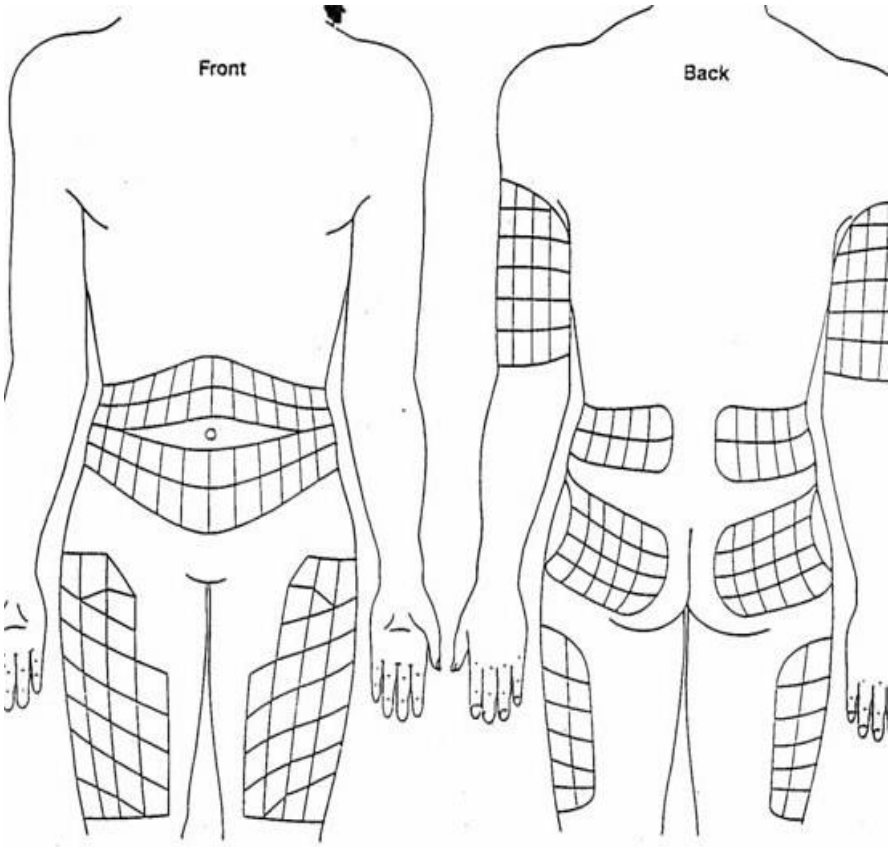
Inject the medication slowly. Rapid injection will put pressure on the tissue and cause pain.

For comfort and safety, use needles only once.

Talk to your healthcare provider if the injection site is swollen and painful, looks infected or does not heal within a few days, has fluid draining from it, or has a break in the skin.

Always remember that the staff at Specialty by Birdi is available to provide the extra support you need to help you take your medications correctly and

consistently every time. Our clinical staff is always available for consultations, including medication counseling, and to questions about your disease and side effect management throughout treatment.



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