

The hospital staff will inform you on discharge on how long to continue the injections.

When the course of injections are complete, please close the sharps bin provided. The hospital staff will inform you of where these need to be taken for disposal.

Patient Information for the Gloucestershire  
Health Community

## **Administration of a subcutaneous injection**

## Introduction

The information to follow will guide you through the steps of administering a subcutaneous injection.

## What is a subcutaneous injection?

This is an injection given in the fatty layer of tissue under the skin

The most common body areas used to give these injections are :-

- fleshy part of the thigh.
- abdomen

Your nurse will be able to give you further information on this matter. Please remember to rotate the site of the injection every day to keep the skin healthy.

## How do I prepare for the injection?

### Prepare the skin

- Firstly wash your hands thoroughly. This is the best way to prevent infection.
- Then wash the area of skin, unless already clean. This is aimed to prevent infection at the site.
- Allow the skin to dry before giving the injection.

### Prepare the injection device

- Take one of the pre-filled injections from the box. Please ensure that the fluid inside the syringe is clear and free from particles.
- Remove the cover from the needle. Be careful not to contaminate the needle. If you are injecting Fragmin you should be able to see a small air bubble in the syringe. This can be left in the syringe for injecting.

### Inject

- Hold the syringe in one hand like a pencil.
- Then grasp 2-inch fold of the area of skin to be injected between the thumb and index finger.
- Then introduce the needle quickly, but in a controlled manner all the way into the skin at a 90 degree angle. The angle is important to allow all the medication to be injected into the fatty tissue. However in individuals with very little subcutaneous fat, the angle of injecting may vary. Your nurse will demonstrate this for you before you go home. **DO NOT PRESS DOWN ON THE PLUNGER WHILE PIERCING THE SKIN.**
- After the needle is completely inserted into the skin, release the skin that you are grasping.

- Then hold the base of the syringe with your free hand to stabilize it.
- Then inject the medication at a slow steady state by pushing the plunger to deliver the drug. The medication should then be injected over no less than 5 seconds.
- Then remove the needle slowly.
- Do not be alarmed if you notice a small amount of blood at the injection site when the needle is removed. It is likely that you have nicked a small blood vessel when injecting. You may wish to wipe the area with a clean tissue, but do not apply pressure to the area. Slight bruising at the injection site is common. However, if the bruising worsens after 24 hours, please contact our G.P for advice.

If you do have any queries/problems with administering the medicine following discharge from hospital, please contact your district nurse in your GP surgery for further assistance.

## Disposal of the syringe

- Do not put the cap back on the needle
- Discard the entire syringe in the sharps container supplied
- Wash hands when finished

Please store the sharps container in a safe and secure place and keep out of reach of children.