

// SELF-INJECTION GUIDE

Subcutaneous Injection

How to draw and give a subcutaneous injection at home.
Read it all the way through once before your first dose.

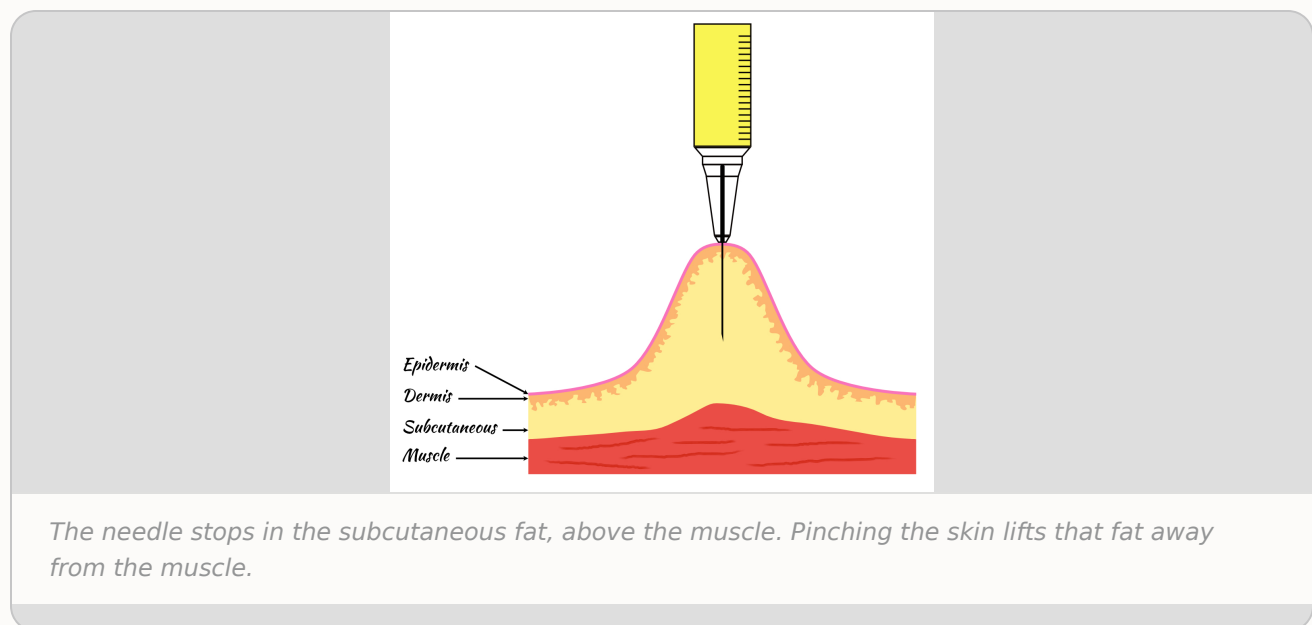
Asymmetric Health

Lacey, WA | 360-706-1808

01 What a **subcutaneous** injection is

A subcutaneous injection puts medication into the layer of fat just under your skin, not into muscle.

That fat layer sits between the skin and the muscle below. It has fewer nerves and blood vessels than muscle, which is part of why these injections are usually quick and close to painless. The medication absorbs slowly and steadily from there.



What you'll need

- Medication vial
- Syringe
- Injection needle (smaller)
- Alcohol wipes (2)
- Drawing needle (larger)
- Sharps container

BEFORE YOU START

Work on a clean, well-lit surface and lay everything out before you open anything sterile. If a step doesn't look or feel right, stop and call 360-706-1808.

02 Clean, then **fill** the syringe

01 Wash and clean first

Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Wipe the top of the vial with one alcohol wipe and your injection site with the other, circling outward from the center to cover a 2-inch area. Let both air dry.

How you fill depends on your medication. Oil-based medications are thicker and need a needle change. Water-based medications are thin enough to draw and inject with one small syringe. Follow the path that matches yours.

OIL-BASED

Two-needle fill

e.g. testosterone

1. Put the **drawing needle** (larger) on the syringe. Pull the plunger to your dose to load that much air.
2. Push through the vial top, inject the air, flip the vial upside down, and draw past your dose. Push back down to about **2 units over** your prescribed dose. That extra accounts for the small amount lost in the new needle.
3. With the draw needle still on, pull a little air back into the syringe to clear the oil from inside it, then switch to the **injection needle** (smaller). This keeps that oil from going to waste.
4. Hold needle-up, flick out bubbles, and press until a drop appears at the tip.

WATER-BASED

Single-syringe fill

e.g. most peptides

1. Use your **insulin or peptide syringe**. No needle change is needed.
2. Pull the plunger to your dose to load air, push through the vial top, and inject the air.
3. Flip the vial upside down and draw to your dose. Overfill slightly, then push back to land exactly.
4. Hold needle-up, flick out bubbles, press until a drop appears, then inject from the same syringe.

! KEEP IT STERILE

Needles and syringes should be new and in sealed packaging. If a needle touches anything other than the cleaned vial top or your cleaned skin, replace it. Not sure which type you have? Call 360-706-1808.

03 Inject

Pinch 1 to 2 inches of skin with your free hand. That lifts the fat away from the muscle and gives you a clear target.

01 Set your angle

Hold the syringe like a dart. If you can pinch a full 2 inches, go in at 90 degrees. If you can only get 1 inch, go in at 45 degrees. Push the needle through the skin in one quick, confident motion until it reaches the colored base.

02 Inject steadily

Rest your hand against your body to steady the syringe, then press the plunger at a slow, even pace. Withdraw the needle quickly when you're done.

SPEED BEATS HESITATION

The slower and more tentative you are going in, the more you'll feel it. Fast and confident, and most people barely notice. If an injection hurts more than usual, stop, put on a fresh needle, and move over a few millimeters. Sometimes that's all it takes.

When something doesn't look right, stop and call. We would rather walk you through it than have you guess.

04 Your injection sites

You want a spot with enough fat to pinch and few nerves or blood vessels. Four areas work well: the back of the upper arm, the abdomen, the love handle, and the outer thigh. Shaded green below.



Subcutaneous injection sites, shaded green. Rotate between them and vary the exact spot each time to avoid scar buildup.

ROTATE YOUR SITES

- ✓ Switch regions between doses
- ✓ Move side to side within a region
- ✓ Shift the exact spot a little each time
- ✓ Skip anything bruised or sore

05 A closer look

BACK OF THE UPPER ARM

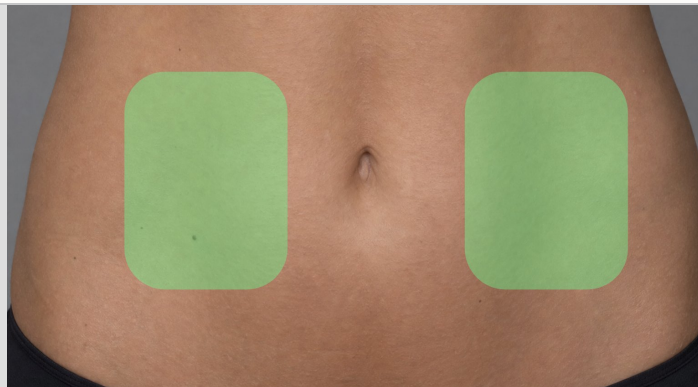
Midway between shoulder and elbow, toward the back where there's more to pinch. This one is easier with a partner.



Back of the upper arm

ABDOMEN

The soft area around your midsection. Stay at least 2 inches clear of the navel on either side.



Lower abdomen, both sides of the navel

05 A closer look (cont.)

LOVE HANDLE

The fat that collects above your beltline on the side of your body. Pinch the flank and inject there.



Love handle, above the beltline on the side

OUTER THIGH

Divide your thigh into thirds from hip to knee. Use the middle third on the outer front, wherever you can grab enough skin.



Outer thigh, middle third

06 Dispose safely

Both needles go in a sharps container, never loose in the trash.

A sharps container from a pharmacy or online retailer works. If you'd rather not buy one, a hard plastic container with a screw-on lid does the job, an empty 2-liter bottle or a laundry detergent jug. Label a homemade one "Sharps Waste" on the outside.

! DISPOSAL VARIES BY COUNTY

In Thurston County, a sealed sharps container can go in your regular trash. Other counties differ, so check your local rules before disposing of a full container. Never put loose needles in the trash.

// QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR INJECTION

Call us before you guess.

If a step isn't clear, if an injection hurt more than usual, or if a site looks off, reach out. A quick call now saves a lot of worry later.

CLINIC LINE

360-706-1808

01

Call during clinic hours for non-urgent questions about technique or sites.

02

For anything that feels urgent, treat it as urgent and seek care right away.