

How to Give a Subcutaneous Injection

Getting an injection at your doctor's office happens a lot.

But giving yourself an injection at home isn't so routine.

When you inject medicine under the skin, but not into a muscle, it's called subcutaneous.

Some medicines, such as insulin or blood thinners, are injected under the skin.

They're usually given in the belly or the thigh.

At first, you may be a little nervous about giving yourself a subcutaneous injection.

But after you do it a few times, you'll get the hang of it.

Here's how you do it.

First, have your supplies ready.

You'll need the syringe and an alcohol wipe or a cotton ball dipped in rubbing alcohol.

Wash your hands with soap and water and dry them well.

Next, choose a spot on your belly to give the injection... at least 2 inches-- about 5 centimeters--to the side of your belly button.

Clean that area of your skin using the alcohol wipe or cotton ball and let it dry.

Then remove the cap from the needle and hold the syringe like a pencil, keeping your fingers off the plunger.

Now slightly pinch a fold of skin where you will give the injection.

Hold the syringe at a 90-degree angle to your skin so it's standing straight out, right above the place where you'll give the injection.

Quickly jab the needle all the way into the pinched-up skin, then push the plunger all the way in so the medicine empties out of the syringe.

Take the needle out at the same angle you put it in, then let go of your skin.

If you bleed a little, put pressure on the spot with a cotton ball or a piece of gauze.

Don't rub the area, since this can cause bruising.

Pointing the needle away from you, throw away the syringe in a safe place, such as a special container for needles.

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And then wash your hands again.

Also, make sure to give the injection in a slightly different spot each time you do it.

At first, giving yourself an injection may feel a little stressful.

Before you know it, it will probably feel like a normal part of your routine caring for yourself.

But call your care team if you have any problems.