

# Intramuscular Injection

## INSTRUCTIONS

### 1 HOW TO TRANSFER CONTENTS FROM VIAL TO SYRINGE

First, remove the plastic cap from the medication vial and use an alcohol wipe to cleanse the rubber stopper. With a fresh, unused syringe, pull back on the plunger to the amount you are injecting, bringing air into the syringe. Now, remove the plastic cap from the needle. Insert the needle into the vial and slowly push (inject) the air from the syringe into the vial (this will displace the liquid in the vial when you withdraw the medication). Turn the vial and syringe upside down and carefully draw the fluid back into the syringe to the line designating the desired amount of medication. If you see any air bubbles, lightly tap or click the syringe to draw the bubbles to the top (the end with the needle) and expel the air. Note that a small amount of medication may release as well. This is normal. You are now ready to inject.

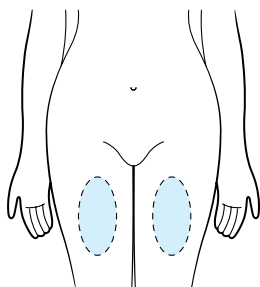
### 2 WHERE CAN I GIVE AN INTRAMUSCULAR SHOT?

The skin and muscles cover nerves, blood vessels, and bones. It is important to give a shot where you will not hurt any of these body parts. There are 6 possible areas, 3 on each side of the body, where an Intramuscular (IM) shot can be given. It is important to choose the correct area. If caregivers showed you what areas are safe, follow their directions. Constantly rotate the area where you give shots. If you give a shot in the same place every day or even every week, scar tissue can build up. This scar tissue can negatively affect how the medication will work. Following the information in this guide will help you choose the safest areas to give an intramuscular injection.

#### Vastus Lateralis Muscle (Thigh) (VAS-tuss lat-er-AL-iss)

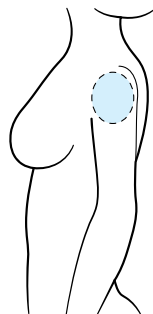
The thigh is used often for children, especially children under 3. It is also a good place for an adult. The thigh area is especially useful if you need to give yourself a shot because it is easy to see.

- In your mind, divide the thigh (the area between the knee and hip) into three equal parts.
- This muscle is called the vastus lateralis. It runs along the top of the thigh (the front) and a little to the outside. Put your thumb in the middle of the top of the thigh, and your fingers along the side. The muscle you feel between them is the vastus lateralis.



#### Deltoid Muscle (Shoulder) (DEL-toyd)

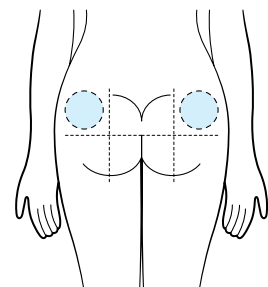
- The person receiving the shot can be sitting, standing, or lying down. Start with a completely exposed upper arm. You will give the shot in the center of an upside-down triangle. Feel for the bone that goes across the top of the upper arm. This bone is called the acromion process. The bottom of it will form the base of a triangle. The point of the triangle is directly below the middle of the base at about the level of the armpit. The correct area to give a shot is in the center of the triangle, 1 to 2 inches (2.5 to 5 cm) below the bottom of the acromion process.



#### Ventrogluteal Muscle (Hip) (ven-trow-GLUE-tee-ull)

The hip is an area with good bone landmarks and very little danger of hitting blood vessel or nerves. It is a good place for a shot for adults.

- To find the correct place to give a shot in the hip: Place your thumb on the base of your tail-bone and bring it across midway to your hip in a straight line and place your index finger about 2 inches (5 cm) below the ridge of your hip bone. The V-shape area between your thumb and index finger is the ventrogluteal muscle.



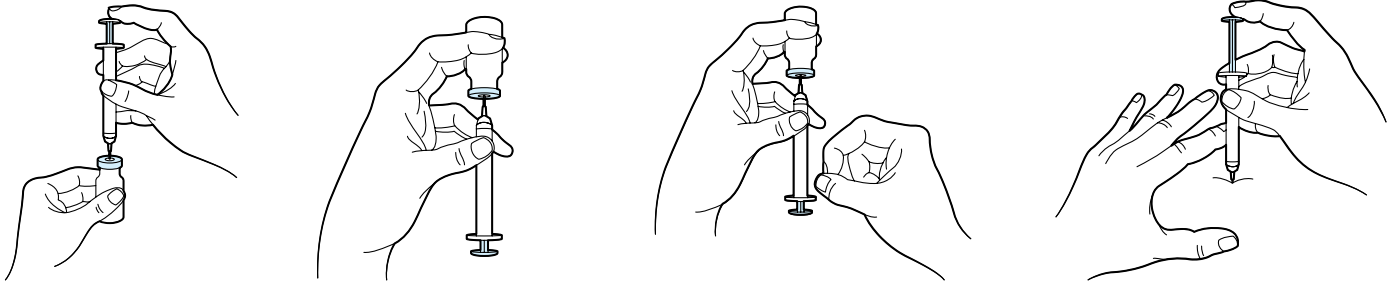
### 3 HOW DO I INJECT MEDICATION INTO A MUSCLE?

1. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and dry them completely. Put on gloves if necessary.
2. Take the cover off the needle by holding the syringe with your writing hand and pulling on the cover with your other hand. It is like taking a cap off a pen.
3. Hold the syringe in the hand you use to write. Place the syringe under your thumb and first finger. Let the barrel of the syringe rest on your second finger. Many people hold a pen this way when they write.
4. Wipe the area with an alcohol wipe where the needle will go. Let the area dry.
5. Depress and pull the skin taut with your free hand. Keep holding the skin a little to the side of where you plan to insert the needle.
6. Use your wrist to inject the needle at a 90-degree angle (straight in). The action is like shooting a dart. Do not slowly push the needle in, either. Thrusting the needle can cause bruising. The needle is sharp, and it will go through the skin easily when your wrist action is correct.
7. Let go of the skin. As you let go of the skin, hold the syringe so it stays pointed straight in.
8. Pull back on the plunger just a little to make sure you aren't in a blood vessel.

**Note: (If blood comes back you are likely in a blood vessel.)**

**Remove the needle and dispose of both the syringe and the medicine. Repeat the above steps to draw more medicine in a new syringe. When you give the second shot give it on the opposite side.)**

9. Push down on the plunger to inject the medication. Do not force the medication by pushing hard on the plunger. Some medications may sting slightly. They will hurt more if the medication is injected too rapidly.
10. Pull the needle out quickly once all the medication is injected, at the same angle it went in.
11. Dispose of the syringe and needle in a Sharps Container.



### 4 WHAT ITEMS DO I NEED TO GIVE A SHOT?



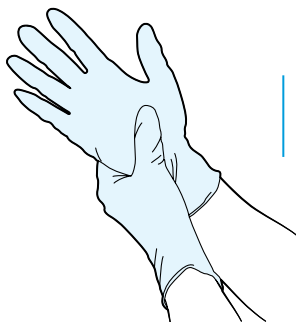
One alcohol wipe



Vial containing the medication



The correct size needle and syringe (included in your package)



You may want to use gloves for your protection or the protection of the person receiving the shot

### 5 HOW CAN I GET RID OF USED SYRINGES AND NEEDLES?

You can purchase a Sharps Container, which is a hard-plastic container made especially for used syringes and needles, at your local pharmacy. If you did not purchase this container with your medication, you can use a hard-plastic container with a screw-on top such as a clothing softener or hard plastic detergent bottle. Make sure you can easily put both the syringe and the needle into the container.

**Whatever container you choose, make sure that the needles cannot break through the sides, bottom, or top.**

Call your primary care physician or your local pharmacy to find out what your state or local requirements are for disposing of used syringes and needles.

