

INJECTION ZONES

AVOID HEAD & NECK: There are major nerves and arteries in the neck. Injuries or infections here can be very dangerous.

ARMS:

Use surface veins in arms if they are in good shape. Rotate sites regularly.

AVOID WRISTS:

Nerves, veins, & arteries are all close together in the wrists. Injecting here is dangerous.

AVOID THE GROIN & INNER THIGHS:

There are major arteries here. If you hit one, you could lose a leg or die. Never inject into or around the genitals.

LEGS:

Blood flows slowly in the legs, so inject slowly. Be careful not to hit the artery behind the knee. It is easier to get blood clots here.

HANDS & FEET: Veins on the back of hands and top of the feet collapse easily. Injecting here hurts. Go slowly.

OUR TEAM ARE HERE TO HELP. QUESTIONS?

ASK AN EXPERIENCED PEER WORKER!



HIERARCHY OF SAFETY

ARMS: The upper and lower arms are the safer sites for injecting.

HANDS: Hand veins are smaller, delicate and more likely to bruise or collapse. Use the thinnest needle possible and inject slowly.

LEGS: Leg veins are more likely to develop clots that can obstruct circulation and eventually break off and lodge in the lungs or heart. Damaging the valves in the leg veins is more serious since they play a greater role in getting blood back to the heart.

FEET: Foot veins are smaller and close to nerves, cartilage, and tendons which should be avoided when injecting. Blood circulates more slowly in the foot veins and so they require longer to heal.

**FIND OUT HOW TO
ACCESS PBHR WA'S NSEP**



CONTACT US!

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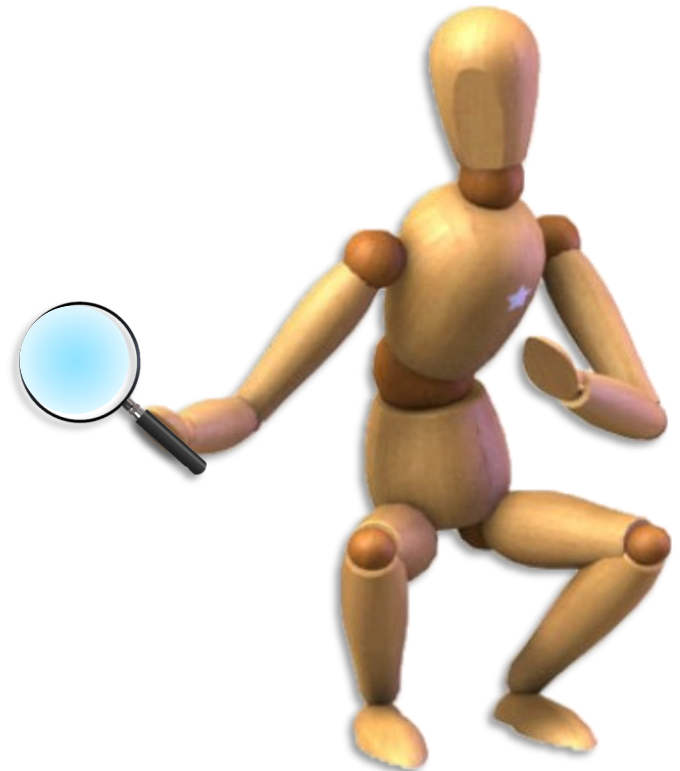
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FINDING VEINS



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BEFORE YOU START...

ARE YOU HYDRATED?

When your body is properly hydrated, blood pumps through your veins more readily, making them larger and easier to see.

It is much harder to find a vein when you are dehydrated.

Try to plan ahead. The water you drink can take 20 to 60 minutes to enter your bloodstream.

At the very least, drink 2 big glasses of water 20 minutes before injecting. For best results, when possible, aim to drink 1 to 4 glasses of water one hour before injecting.

ARE YOU COLD?

Warmth is your friend! **Warmth will cause your veins to dilate, making them easier to find.**

Step 1: Raise your body temperature - especially if you have been out in the cold. Try a hot drink, a jumper, or a warm shower.

Step 2: Warm your injection site. Try a hot pack, a hair dryer, or warm water for a few minutes before injecting. Don't burn yourself!

ROTATE YOUR SITE

If you rotate your injection sites your veins will last longer.

Try to cycle between 3 different sites so that each individual site has a chance to heal before you use it again.

It is a good idea to learn how to inject with both hands so that you have double the number of sites to choose from.

USE A TOURNIQUET

If used correctly, a tourniquet will anchor your veins so they don't roll as much, and make them easier to see and inject into.

The aim is to increase blood pressure by allowing blood in (through your arteries) while stopping it from getting out (through your veins). To do this, only medium pressure is required.

If your tourniquet is too tight, it will not work effectively.

For more information about tourniquets, check out *Tourniquets: A Users Guide*.



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SWING YOUR ARM

Extend your injecting arm out to your side and swing it in circles for 20 to 30 seconds.

Centrifugal force will cause blood to rush into the arm as it spins. Do this before you put your tourniquet on and the blood should temporarily enhance the vein.

MUSCLE ACTIVATION

After applying your tourniquet, clenching and unclenching your hand can temporarily increase local blood flow to the veins in the arm, effectively pumping them up.

POSITIONING

Keep the limb positioned below the level of your heart to utilise gravity to help fill the vessels.

PRACTICE VEIN CARE

After injecting, apply pressure to your site until any bleeding stops. Then, apply Hirudoid cream to help reduce bruising and inflammation.

If possible, vitamin E oil applied to all of your injecting sites daily after a shower can help to reduce scarring.