

IF YOU CAN'T AVOID IT

Needles and syringes are intended to be used one time and then disposed of. Reusing them carries a risk of serious infection and we strongly recommended that you avoid this.

If you think you will need to reuse your own syringe and you can't avoid it, rinse it several times immediately after use in clean cold tap water. This will remove most of the blood and help reduce the risk of infection if it is reused.

Recap and then mark it so that you will know it is yours later on.

CLEANING UP

Swabs, filters, and water ampoules become contaminated with bacteria once opened.

Carefully place used needles and syringes, and **all other used equipment** into a rigid walled, puncture-proof plastic container and seal the lid.

If possible, return the sealed container to your nearest needle and syringe exchange program for safe disposal. If this is not possible, the sealed container can be disposed of in a general waste bin.

Wipe down your preparation area with soapy water or bleach.

Next, wash your hands and arms with warm soapy water. If this is not possible, use hand sanitiser or new swabs.

USING IN GROUPS

When injecting with other people, be blood aware. Keep your own equipment separate to help reduce the risk of accidental sharing. If you help someone else to inject, wash your hands before and after.

If you have to divide a mix, everyone will need sterile syringes. If this is not possible, stop and divide the gear while it is dry. Only sterile syringes can go into the spoon or baggie to draw up.

If you only have one sterile syringe, that is the only one you can use to draw up with. That syringe can then divide the mix into separate spoons or baggies and people without sterile syringes can draw up from those. It might take a little longer to do but it can prevent the transmission of blood-borne viruses like HIV, hepatitis B or hepatitis C.

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



CONTACT US!

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SAFER INJECTING STEP BY STEP



www.harmreductionwa.org

All drug use has a risk of harm associated with it, but there are some things you can do to help reduce that risk when you are injecting...

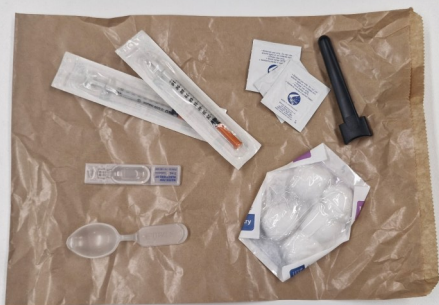
PREPARATION

Make sure the surface you are going to mix up on is clean. If you can't wipe it down, use the paper bag or the box your equipment came in as a work surface.

Have everything you need within reach.

Wash your hands and arms thoroughly in warm soapy water to help remove viruses, dirt and bacteria.

If you can't wash your hands, use hand sanitiser or swabs to clean them, especially your fingertips. Use several swabs to wipe the dirt away and after that, wipe in one direction with a clean swab to move the dirt away like a squeegee. Allow the swabbed area to air dry without wiping or blowing on it.



MIXING UP

1. Clean the spoon by wiping it in one direction with a new swab and let it air dry before you add your gear.
2. Use your sterile syringe to draw up water from a newly opened ampoule of sterile water or cooled boiled water in a clean glass.
3. Add the water and use the blunt end of your sterile syringe to mix.
4. Next it's time to filter your mix. If you aren't sure, ask our friendly team which filters are appropriate for the drug you are using or **check out our *Why Filter?* resource.**
5. Remove air bubbles by pointing the syringe upwards and flicking it on the side. When the air bubbles rise to the top, push the plunger slowly until all the bubbles have escaped.
6. Place the tourniquet above your injection site, but don't tighten it yet.
7. Swab your site. Wipe once in one direction to push any remaining dirt and germs to one side.
8. Tighten the tourniquet to medium pressure but don't leave it on too long. If you are having trouble finding a vein, release the tourniquet and then try again. **Check out our *Tourniquets: A Users' Guide* resource for more tips.**

9. For help finding a vein, check out our ***Finding Veins* resource.**
10. Put the needle in your arm at a 45-degree angle with the eye facing up and guide it into a vein. This position will give you a sharper entry and allow you to easily see the needle tip.
11. Pull back the plunger slightly and dark red blood will appear in the barrel if you are in the vein.
12. If no blood appears, loosen the tourniquet and remove the needle. **Keep the arm outstretched and add pressure to the site with clean cotton or tissue until the bleeding stops. Take a deep breath and start again, using a different vein and syringe if possible.**
13. When you are sure the needle is in a vein, loosen your tourniquet and slowly depress the plunger. If you feel any resistance or pain you may have missed the vein. Do not continue. Return to step 12.
14. When finished, slowly remove the needle. **Keep the arm outstretched and add pressure to the site as in step 12. Don't use a swab to apply pressure as the alcohol can stop blood from clotting.**

**FIND OUR OTHER
RESOURCES HERE**

