

VEIN CARE

Never apply creams or oils to an open wound or a fresh injection site. Wait until the bleeding has completely stopped and the entry point has started closing.

Hirudoid cream can help reduce swelling and bruising faster. In addition to this, vitamin E oil applied daily can help to soften scar tissue and assist healing.

IF YOU MISS A SHOT

Once any bleeding has stopped, apply a warm compress to your injection site and elevate it for half an hour. This will help encourage the part of your mix that didn't make it into your vein to absorb into the surrounding tissue.

If a day or two passes and the bump is still there, and especially if your injection site starts to look lumpy and red or feels hot, it may be infected. Draw a line with a pen around the edge of the redness and keep an eye on it for a while. If the redness grows beyond the line you drew, the infection may be spreading, and it is time to seek medical attention before a relatively small problem becomes a really big problem.

Check out our **Injection Infection** resource for more helpful harm reduction information!

VISIT US IN PERTH OR BUNBURY

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Suite 22 / 7 Aberdeen St

Phone: (08) 9325 8387

Mon - Fri: 10am to 5pm

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Closed on public holidays!



BUNBURY:

97 Spencer Street

Phone: (08) 9791 6699

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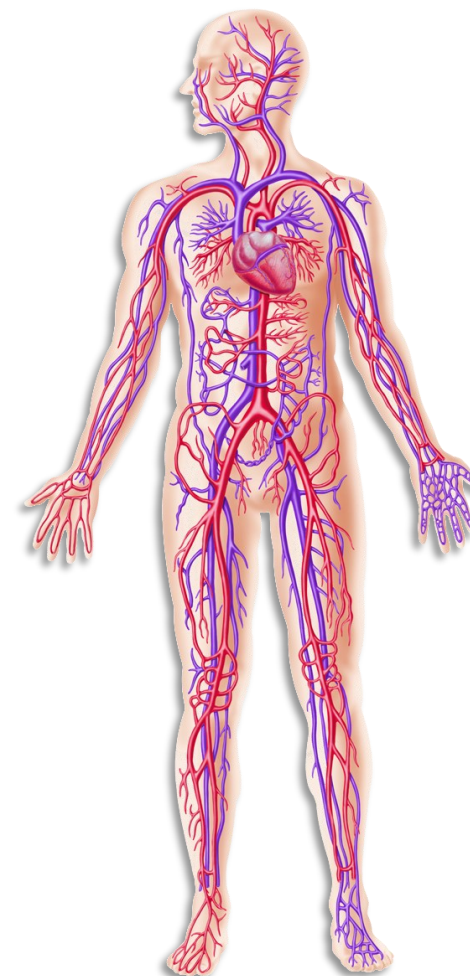


**FIND MORE HELPFUL
HARM REDUCTION
INFO ON OUR
WEBSITE!**



peer based
harm reduction wa

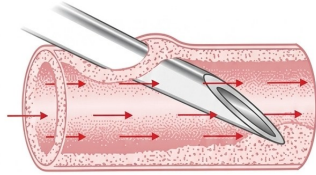
SAVE YOUR VEINS



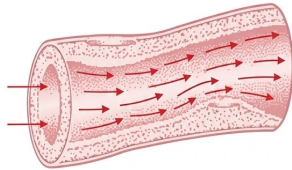
www.harmreductionwa.org

HOW DO VEINS COLLAPSE?

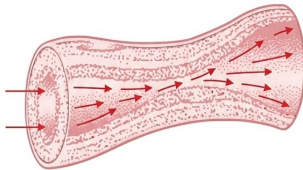
Injection damages the inside lining of the vein. Repeated injection at the same site causes further damage.



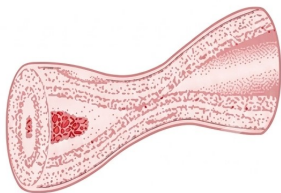
Clots form in the turbulent blood around the damaged area.



As the vein becomes narrower, the turbulence increases and clots form more rapidly.



Finally, the sides of the vein heal together and the vein collapses as the scar tissue draws the sides together.



QUICK TIPS FOR VEIN CARE

PERFECT THE **ANGLE**

Insert the needle at a 45-degree angle (depending slightly on how shallow the vein is). This angle helps you glide smoothly and gently into the vein.

Going in too steep can pierce right through the back wall of the vein. Going in too shallow can miss the vein all together.

MASTER THE **TOURNIQUET**

Choose a tourniquet with a wide surface area and some elasticity. Avoid narrow, ropy things like shoelaces or cords.

Use medium pressure, but always undo the tourniquet before pushing in the plunger. Injecting into a blocked, high-pressure vein can cause damage.

If you find it difficult to undo a quick-release clip tourniquet without dislodging the needle from the vein, consider trying a simple stretch tourniquet instead. Adjust the tension and then clamp it against the side of your body to hold it in place. Move your arm away from your body to release it without having to take your hand off the syringe.

PUSH THE PLUGGER **SLOWLY**

Once your needle is in the vein and you have released the tourniquet, push the plunger in slowly and smoothly.

Rushing the injection or pushing too hard forces a high volume of fluid into a small space quickly, which can stretch, tear, and damage your vein.

ROTATE YOUR **SITE**

The more you look after your veins the healthier they will be and the easier they will be to use.

Give your spot a rest after you have used it a couple of times. It needs a chance to heal. Hitting the same spot over and over will make the vein collapse and block up permanently with scar tissue.

A NEW FIT FOR EVERY HIT

Use a brand-new, sterile needle and syringe every time.

A needle tip will blunt after just one use. A reused needle saws through the vein instead of gliding, causing rapid scarring and vein collapse - as well as increasing the risk of bacterial infection.