

Safer Injecting

Avoid Head and Neck.

Overdosing is more likely when you shoot up near areas closest to the heart and brain. Abscesses are more dangerous here too.



Arms.

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

Avoid the Wrists.

Nerves, veins and arteries are all close together in the wrists. Shooting up here is dangerous.



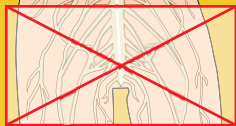
Hands and Feet.

The veins on the back of the hands and the top of the feet are sensitive. If you inject here, it will hurt! Inject slowly.



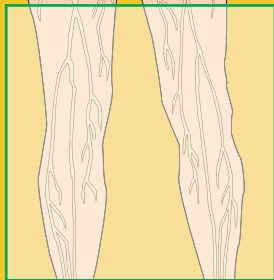
Avoid the Groin area.

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.



Reducing your risk...

Injecting drugs, including steroids, is always a risky thing to do. If you choose to inject drugs, using safer injecting techniques can help you reduce your risk of getting an infection or a virus. **Remember – sharing injecting equipment can spread HIV and Hepatitis B and C.**

These ideas can help you reduce some of the risks:

- **Never share, lend or borrow** any drug-injecting equipment (needles, cookers, filters, water, etc.).
- Always use a **new needle** for each injection – “a new fit for every hit.”
- When preparing your fix, **keep the area around you as clean as possible.**
- **Wash your hands** before and after you shoot up.
- Pick a place on your body where it is safer to inject (see front of card).
- Always use clean water (not water from toilets or puddles).
- Clean the injecting area with an alcohol swab.
- After injecting, apply pressure to the vein to stop the bleeding (bleeding causes bruising, which makes the vein difficult to use the next time).
- Put your used equipment safely in a sharps container (or a hard plastic or glass bottle with a lid).
- Get more information about safer injecting from a street nurse or at your local public health clinic or needle exchange site.

Danger Signs... If you experience any of the following:

- fever, chills, sweats, seeing spots
 - dizziness, ringing in ears
 - red lines on skin near injection site
 - headaches that won't stop
 - repeated vomiting
 - difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- ...seek immediate medical help. Don't wait until it's too late.**

Need more HIV and AIDS information and resources?

Contact CATIE (Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange) at 1-800-263-1638

E-mail: info@catie.ca www.catie.ca

Need more information on Hepatitis C?

www.hepcinfo.ca

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