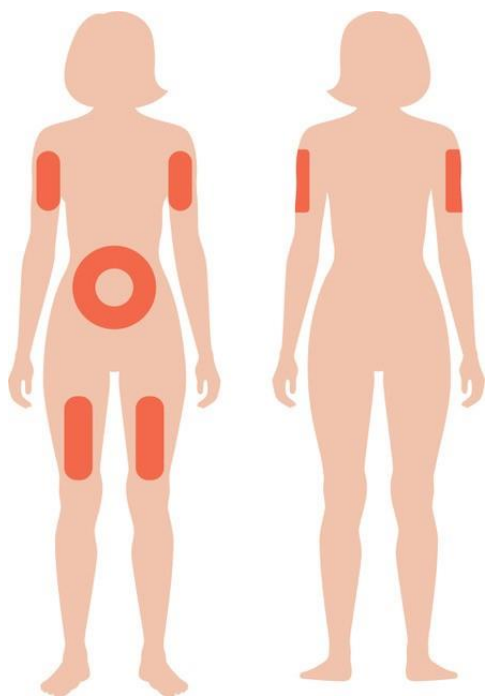


# Subcutaneous Injections

A subcutaneous injection delivers medication into the fatty tissue just below your skin. Since there is little blood flow in fatty tissue, the medication is absorbed more slowly.

## How to Give a Subcutaneous Injection with a Preloaded Syringe

1. Wash your hands thoroughly to prevent infection.
2. Assemble and check your equipment. Make sure the medication is not cloudy and that there is no sediment. If you see either, throw it away and use a new syringe.



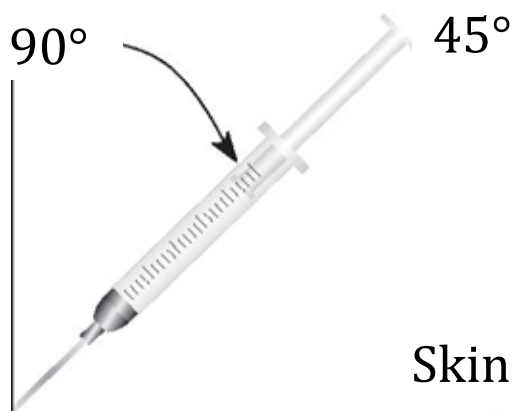
3. Pick a location for the injection. The best sites are areas with a layer of fat between the skin and muscle - the shaded areas on the diagram: the front of the thigh, your belly (at least 1-inch away from your navel), or the upper, outer arm. (If self-injecting, use thigh or belly, the arm site may be difficult to reach.)

**Avoid areas where the skin is red, irritated, bruised, burned, hardened, scarred, or has lumps or stretch marks.**

**It is important to rotate injection sites so your skin stays healthy and able to absorb medication. Talk to your nurse to learn more about rotating your injection sites.**

4. Clean the area: Using an alcohol swab or pad, clean a 2-inch area around the site you have chosen. Begin at the center of the site and move outward in a circular motion. Allow the skin to dry; this will help avoid stinging during the injection. If your doctor tells you to clean the area differently, *always follow your doctor's directions.*
5. Hold the syringe in your dominant hand and use the other hand to pinch a 1-inch fold of skin. This helps prevent injecting the solution into a muscle.

6. Hold the syringe like a pen and with a quick, smooth motion, push the needle into the skin at an angle between  $45^{\circ}$  and  $90^{\circ}$  (see diagram). Your doctor or nurse will let you know if you need to use a straight  $90^{\circ}$  degree angle. Keep the angled (beveled) side of the needle facing up, towards you.



7. Inject the medication by pushing carefully and slowly on the plunger.
8. Wait briefly and then withdraw the needle at the same angle as it was inserted. Hold a cotton ball or alcohol prep pad over the site – do not rub. If there is any bleeding after 5 seconds, cover with a Band-Aid®.
9. Use each syringe only once. Discard the used syringe into a hard container right away – do not try to get the cap back on.
10. After 2 hours, check the injection site for signs of redness, swelling, or tenderness. If any of these are present and do not go away in a few days, notify your clinic.

Roswell Park has a video on how to give a subcutaneous injection. If you are using prefilled syringes, you can start the video at time marker 1:37.

Video: <https://youtu.be/LNXOFKjTPJc>