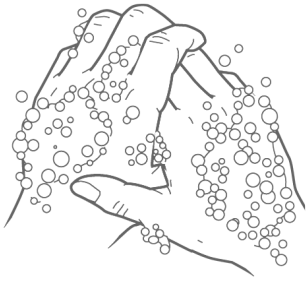
Giving Your Child Shots (Subcutaneous Injections)

What do I do before I start?

When you receive your supplies check the medicine vials or prepared syringes to make sure that the medicine and dose are correct. Check the date the medicine expires. Call your child's clinic if you have any questions.

Wash your hands



Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water, or use a hand sanitizer such as Purell.

Every time you set up for an injection, use a clean work area for laying out your supplies. Wash the area using soap and water or a bleach and water solution (1 part bleach to 10 parts water), or lay down a clean towel to make a clean area.

Opened vials of medicine must be stored in the refrigerator and thrown away after _____ days.

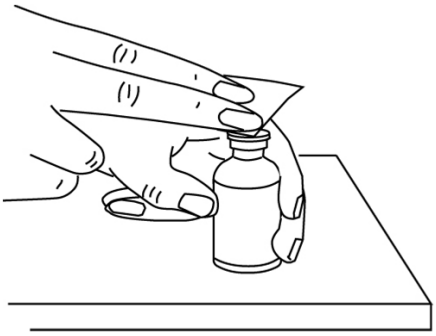
What supplies do I need?

Syringe size(s) _____	❑
Needle only	❑
Alcohol wipes	❑
Vial of medicine	❑
Sharps container	❑
Band-Aid	❑

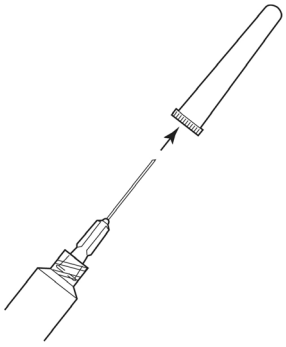
Procedure:

Getting the syringe ready

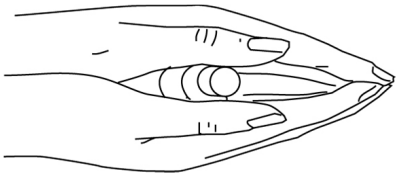
1. Get the syringe ready right before you give the shot. Do not get syringes ready ahead of time for the next shot.
2. Get out the supplies and place them on a clean surface.
3. To open the medicine vial for the first time, flip off the plastic top and throw it away. Make sure the medicine is clear (free of particles and not discolored).



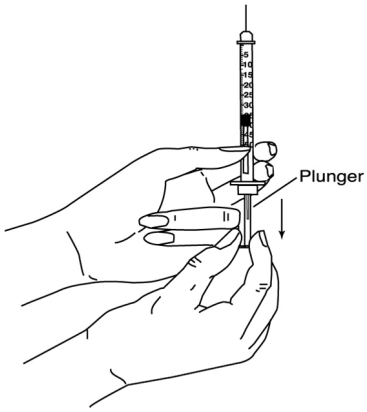
4. Clean the top of the vial with alcohol and let it dry.



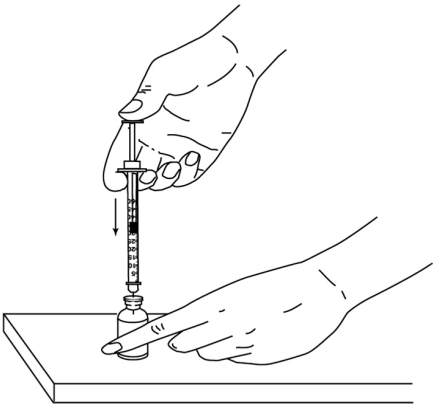
5. Remove the cap. Be careful not to poke yourself on the needle



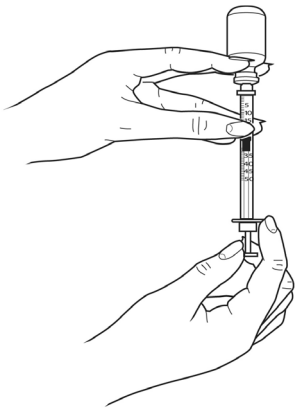
6. Prepare the medicine, if needed, as instructed on the medicine label.



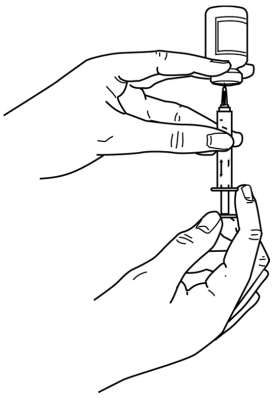
7. Pull back on the syringe plunger to draw up _____mL of air into the syringe.



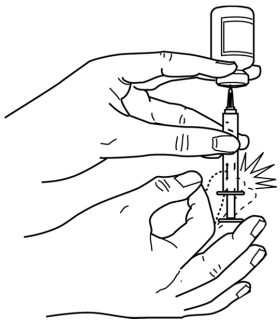
8. Put the needle into the top of the medicine vial and push the plunger to inject the air into the vial.



9. While keeping the needle in the vial, turn the vial and syringe upside down. Make sure there is no air in the syringe. Push up on the plunger.



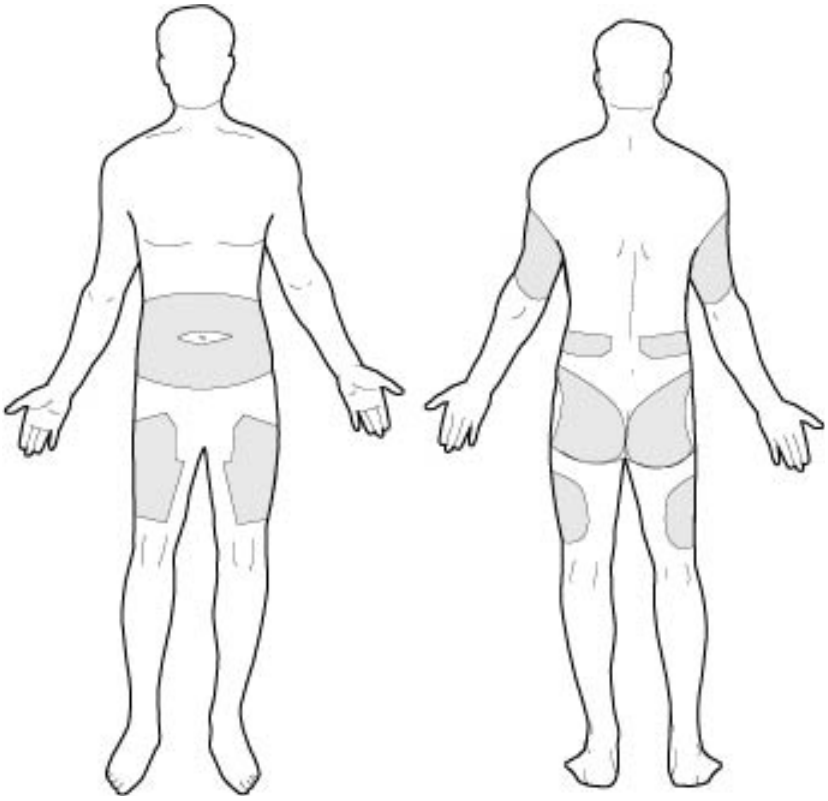
10. Pull back the plunger until you get a bit more medicine than you need in the syringe.



11. Check for bubbles. Tap the syringe to get the bubbles to the top. With the needle pointing to the ceiling, push the plunger up to get the right amount of medicine. Pull the needle out of the bottle. Do not let the needle touch anything. It is ready to use!

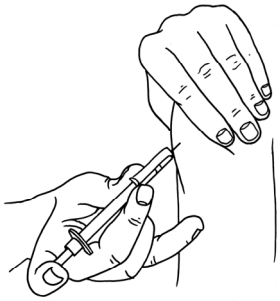
Giving injections

1. Pick a place to give the shot. Clean the skin with an alcohol swab, except for insulin injections. Be sure to pick a different place at least 1 inch away from where the injection was given last time.



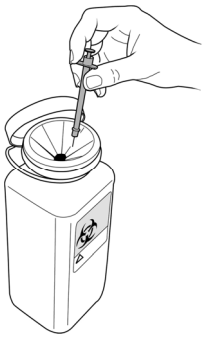
2. Pinch the cleaned skin after it is dry.

3. Hold the needle like a pencil and stick the needle in at a 45 degree angle. (For insulin only: Hold the needle like a dart and stick it in at a 90 degree angle. Insulin needles are tiny and this angle helps break through the skin.)



4. Slowly push the plunger all the way down.

5. Release the “pinch” after the medicine is all in.



6. Slowly pull the needle out and put the whole syringe and needle in its special sharps container. There is no need to put the plastic cap on the needle.

To Learn More

- Call 206-987-2000 and ask for your child's clinic
- Ask your child's healthcare provider
- www.seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your child's nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.
- For Deaf and hard of hearing callers 206-987-2280 (TTY).

7. If the skin is leaking blood or another liquid, place a Band-Aid where you gave the shot.
8. Gather all the small plastic pieces and throw them away to prevent a child or pet from choking on them.
9. Wash your hands.

After giving the injection, watch the location where you gave the injection for:

- A lump or bruise that doesn't go away
- Constant redness, heat or pain
- Call your nurse or your doctor if your child has any of these problems.
- Write down what place you used for this shot. If you use the same place too much, the area can become hard and swollen or sunken-in.
- Be sure to give the next shot at least an inch away from this place.
- If you need help choosing where to give the shots, please call your child's clinic during regular business hours.

Some illustrations in this flyer are reprinted with permission, © 2011, The Ohio State University Medical Center, Columbus, Ohio, Patient Education. All rights reserved. The Ohio State University Medical Center is not responsible for any consequences resulting from the use or misuse of the information on this handout.

Seattle Children's offers interpreter services for Deaf, hard of hearing or non-English speaking patients, family members and legal representatives free of charge. Seattle Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call the Family Resource Center at 206-987-2201.

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children's. However, your child's needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child's healthcare provider.

© 2006, 2009–2011 Seattle Children's, Seattle, Washington. All rights reserved.

11/11
PE638