



How to Administer Intramuscular Injections

Where Can I Give an IM Injection?

Several areas of the body are safe for intramuscular (IM) injections. Follow your healthcare provider's instructions or use the guidance below.

Important Safety Tips

- Avoid injecting into nerves, blood vessels, joints, or bone.
- Rotate injection sites regularly. Repeatedly using the same spot can cause scar tissue to form, which may reduce how well the medication works.

Recommended Injection Sites

1. Thigh (Vastus Lateralis Muscle) – **Best for Self-Injections**

This is usually the easiest site to see and reach on your own.

How to locate it:

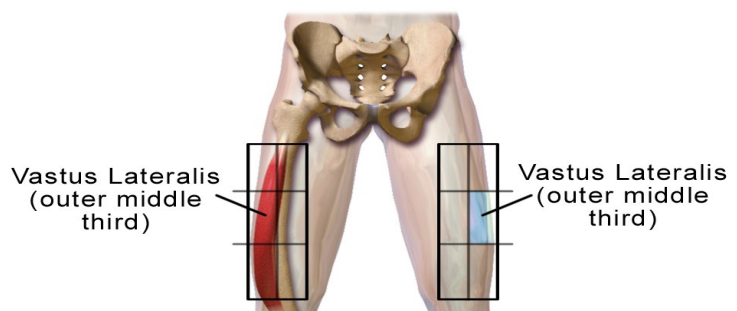
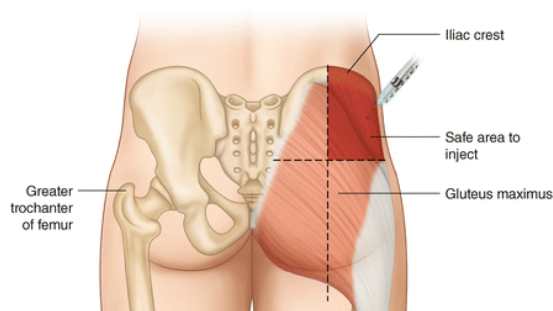
- Divide the front and outer part of your thigh into three equal sections from hip to knee. Use the middle section of the thigh.
- Place your thumb on top of the thigh and your fingers along the side. The muscle beneath this area is the injection site.

2. Hip (Ventrogluteal Muscle)

This area has clear bone landmarks and a low risk of hitting nerves or blood vessels.

How to locate it:

- Place your thumb near the base of your tailbone and move it toward your hip.
- Place your index finger about 2 inches (5 cm) below the ridge of your hip bone.
- The V-shaped area between your thumb and index finger is the injection site.



Supplies You Will Need

- Medication vial
- Correct syringe and needle
- Alcohol wipes
- Gloves (optional)

How to Draw Medication into the Syringe

1. Wash your hands thoroughly and dry them completely. Put on gloves if desired.
 2. Remove the vial's plastic cap and clean the rubber stopper with an alcohol wipe.
 3. Remove the needle cap and pull back the plunger, drawing in air equal to your prescribed medication dose.
 4. Insert the needle into the vial and inject the air into the vial.
 5. Turn the vial upside down and slowly draw the prescribed amount of medication into the syringe.
 6. Check for air bubbles. If present, gently tap the syringe to move bubbles to the top, then push them out through the needle. A small drop of medication at the needle tip is normal.
 7. The syringe is now ready for use.
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How to Give the Injection

1. Clean the injection site with an alcohol wipe and allow it to dry.
2. Hold the syringe like a pen using your dominant hand.
3. With your other hand, gently pull the skin tight.
4. Insert the needle straight into the muscle at a 90-degree angle using a quick, dart-like motion.
5. Release the skin while keeping the syringe steady.
6. Gently pull back on the plunger slightly.
 - If blood appears in the syringe, remove the needle and discard both the syringe and medication. Prepare a new dose and choose a different injection site.
7. If no blood appears, slowly push the plunger to inject the medication.
8. Once all medication has been injected, quickly remove the needle at the same angle it entered.
9. Dispose of the used needle and syringe in an approved sharps container.



Note:

Some medications may cause mild stinging or discomfort during injection. This is often normal.

Safe Needle Disposal

Use a sharps container or a sturdy, puncture-resistant plastic container with a secure lid (such as an empty detergent or thick plastic juice bottle).

Do NOT use: glass containers, paper containers, water bottles, or milk jugs.

Safety Tips

- Keep sharps containers away from children and pets.
- Never place loose needles in the trash or recycling.
- When full, seal the container and follow local disposal guidelines.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Does it hurt?**
Most people feel only a brief pinch.
- **What if I inject in the wrong spot?**
Avoid bruised, swollen, scarred, or irritated areas.
- **What if I miss a dose?**
Follow your provider's instructions. Do not double doses unless directed.
- **Can I reuse a needle or syringe?**
No. Always use a new sterile needle and syringe.
- **Can I inject through clothing?**
No. Inject into clean, bare skin.
- **How should I store my medication?**
Follow the instructions on the medication label or from your provider or pharmacist.

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- **Need Help?**
It's normal to feel nervous at first. Contact your healthcare provider if you have questions or would like additional instruction.

