

# Let's Talk About...

## How to Give a Subcutaneous Injection

A **subcutaneous injection** (sub-cue-TAY-nee-us in-JECK-shun) is a type of shot that puts medicine just under the skin. You give your child this injection with a special syringe and a small, thin needle. This type of injection can be given in your child's legs, arms, belly, or buttocks.

### What supplies do I need?

Sometimes the syringe is prefilled with medicine and ready to use. Other times, you may need to fill the syringe with medicine from a vial [VYE-uh]. A vial is a small glass bottle with a rubber stopper on top.

Depending on which type of injection you need to give, you will need these supplies:

- Alcohol swab
- Prefilled syringe with needle

**or**

- Alcohol swab
- Vial with medicine
- Syringe with needle

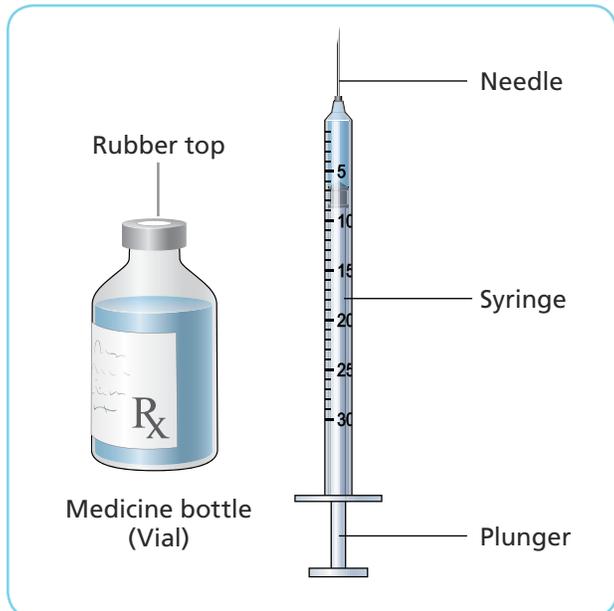
Giving a subcutaneous injection is easy, but you might feel a little nervous at first. With time and practice you will be more comfortable.



### How do I get ready to give an injection with a prefilled syringe

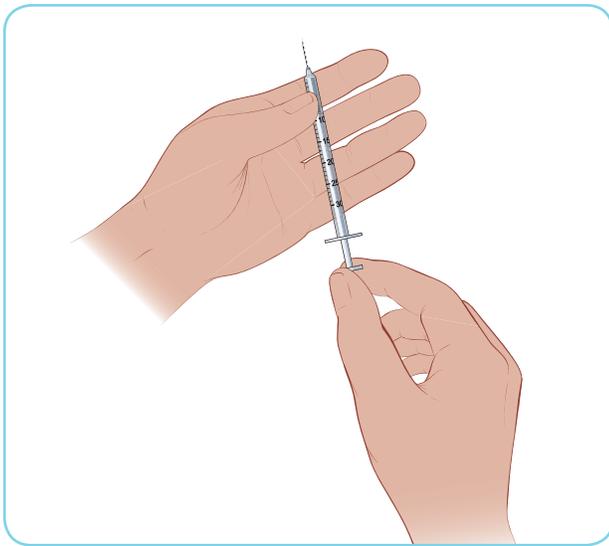
If you are using a syringe that comes with the medicine already in it, follow these steps:

- 1 Wash your hands.
- 2 Remove the cap from the syringe.
- 3 Check to see if the black tip of the plunger is even with the line for your child's dose. Your child's healthcare provider will tell you how much medicine to give your child.
- 4 Squirt out some medicine if there is too much in the syringe.

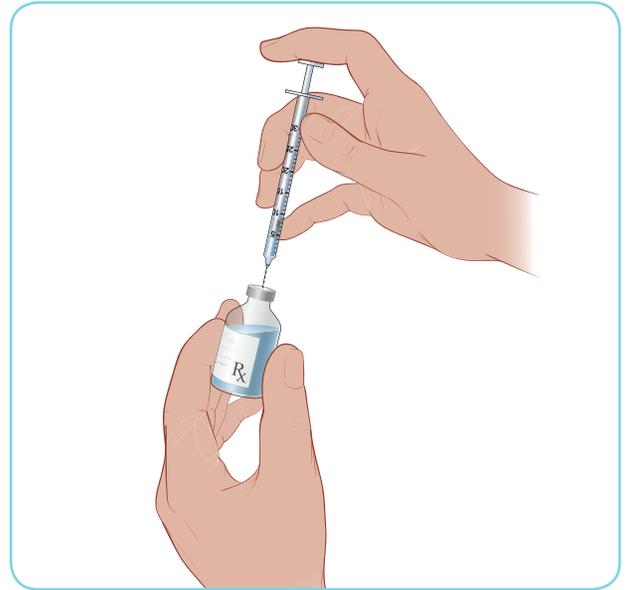


## How do I draw up medicine into a syringe from a vial?

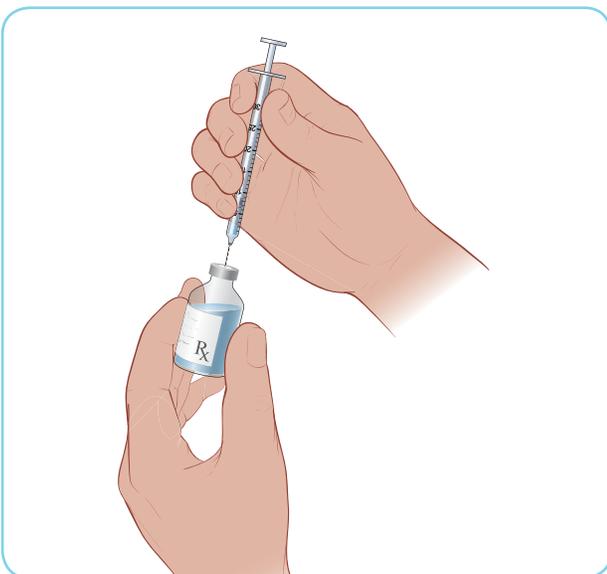
- 1 Wash your hands.
- 2 Wipe the rubber top of the vial with an alcohol swab to clean it.
- 3 Remove the cap from the needle.
- 4 Pull the right amount of air into the syringe. To do this, pull on the plunger until the plunger's black tip is even with the line that shows how much medicine your child needs. Your child's healthcare provider will tell you the right amount for your child.



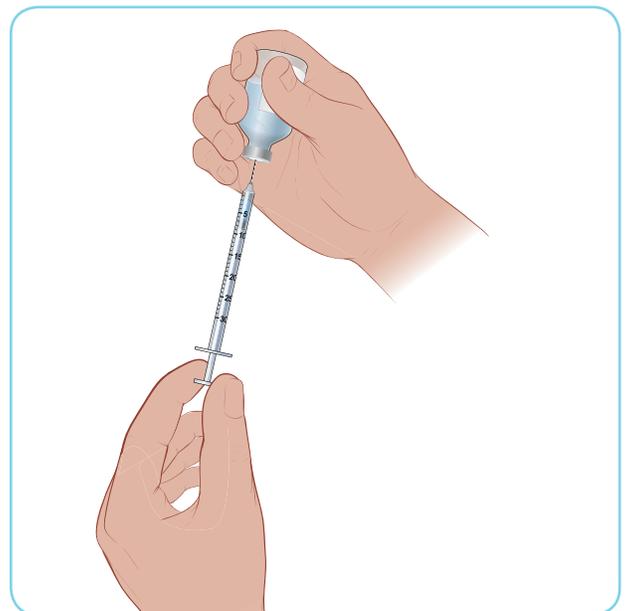
- 6 Push the syringe plunger so that the air moves from the syringe into the vial. (If you don't inject air first, it may be hard to get medicine out of the vial.)



- 5 Push the needle through the rubber top of the vial.



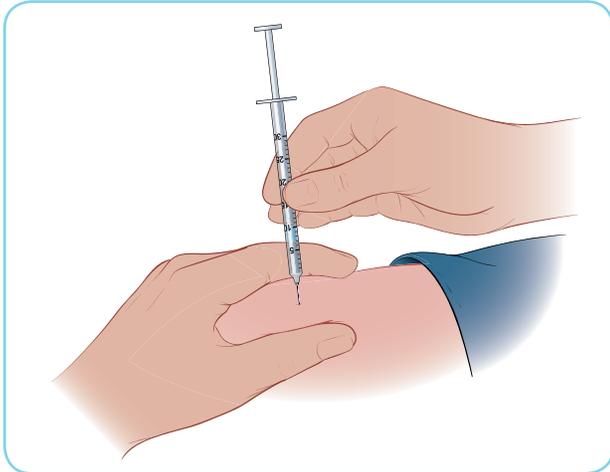
- 7 Turn the vial and syringe upside down.
- 8 Pull the medicine into the syringe by slowly pulling on the plunger until the top of the black tip is even with the line showing your child's dose. Watch carefully to make sure you are pulling medicine into the syringe and not air.



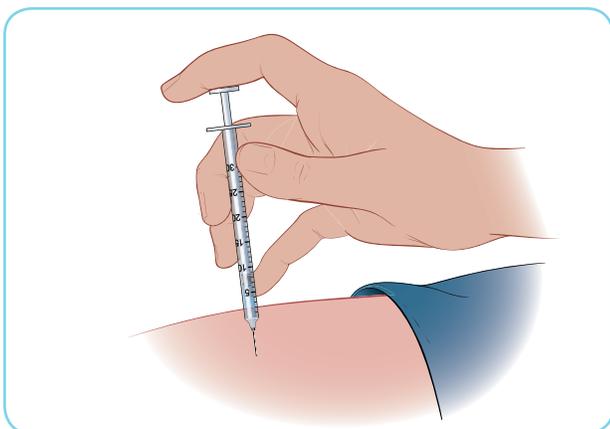
## How do I give my child the injection?

Follow these steps to inject the medicine:

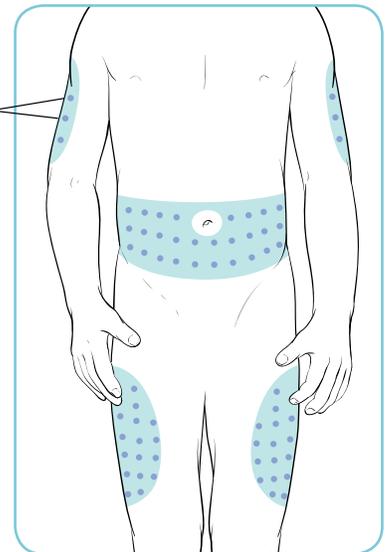
- 1 Choose a place on your child's body to give the injection. (See the pictures showing possible injection sites on the front and back of the body.) Choose a different part of your child's body each time. Avoid areas near bruises, scars, or the belly button.



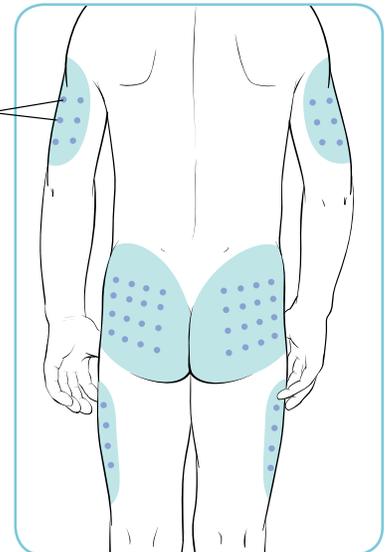
- 2 Wipe the skin with an alcohol swab. If you will be giving many shots over a long time, do **not** wipe with an alcohol swab. It makes the skin tough over time.
- 3 Gently pinch up a fold of skin. Point the syringe straight at your child's skin (not tilted). Then push the needle all the way in.
- 4 Let go of the pinched skin, and slowly push the plunger to inject all the medicine. Count to 10 before pulling the needle out. Push gently on the site with a finger or thumb for a few minutes.



**Injection sites front of body**  
(upper arms, torso, and upper thighs)



**Injection sites back of body**  
(upper arms, buttocks, and upper thighs)



- 5 Put the used syringe in a plastic or metal container with a lid, such as an empty laundry detergent bottle or coffee can. **Don't** put the used syringe directly into the trash. When the container of used syringes is mostly full, close the lid tightly and put the container in the trash.



If there is bleeding at the injection site, hold pressure on the site for 5 to 10 minutes.

