

# How to Give a Subcutaneous Shot: Care Instructions

## Overview

A subcutaneous (sub-kyoo-TAY-nee-us) shot is an injection of medicine under the skin, but not in a muscle. Some medicines, such as hormone therapy, insulin or the blood thinner enoxaparin (Lovenox), are injected under the skin. This type of shot is usually given in the belly or the thigh.

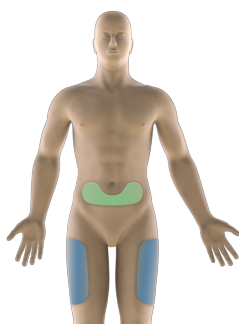
At first you may be nervous about giving yourself a shot. But soon, giving the shot will become routine.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It is also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medications you take.

## How do you give yourself a subcutaneous shot?

Follow your health professional's instructions for where and how often to inject your medicine. Your nurse will show you how to give yourself the shot.

1. Gather your supplies. This includes your syringe (containing medicine) and an alcohol wipe or a cotton ball dipped in alcohol.
2. Wash your hands with soap and running water. Dry them well.
3. Choose a spot on your belly or thigh for the shot. A shot in the belly should be 2 inches away from your belly button.



4. Use alcohol to clean the skin. Let it dry.
5. Remove the cap from the needle.
6. Hold the syringe like a pencil close to the site. Keep your fingers off the plunger.



7. Slightly pinch a fold of skin at the spot you chose. Pinch it between the fingers and thumb of one hand.
8. Place the syringe at a 90-degree angle to the shot site. The needle should stand straight up from the skin.
9. Quickly push the needle all the way into the pinched fold of the skin.
10. Push the plunger of the syringe all the way in. This allows the medicine to go into the fatty tissue. Be sure to hold the skin fold as you give the shot. This will help make sure that you don't inject the medicine into the muscle.
11. Take the needle out at the same angle that you inserted it.
12. Release the skin fold.
13. If you bleed a little, apply pressure over the injection area. You can use a cotton ball or a piece of gauze. To help avoid bruising, don't rub the area.



14. Dispose of the needle safely. Do not use the same needle more than one time. Slightly change the spot where you give the injection each time.

## When should you call for help?

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if you have any problems.

