

Safer injecting

General safety tips

Use sterile equipment every time: always use new needles, syringes, spoons, filters and sterile water. Sharing or reusing equipment increases infection risk.

Prepare carefully: wash your hands, clean your surface, and swab the injection site with an alcohol wipe before injecting.

Rotate sites: repeatedly using the same spot can cause vein collapse, scarring and infection. Changing sites helps preserve your long-term vein health.

Be mindful of your environment: choose a calm, well-lit, safe space. Rushing or using in unsafe environments can increase mistakes and injuries.

Start small and use reagent testing kits: drug strength and contents vary. Reagent testing kits are available online or through local NSPs. If you can't test, a small test shot may reduce overdose risk.

Be aware of mixing risks: combining opioids with alcohol, benzos or other depressants greatly increases overdose risk.

Don't inject alone if possible: having someone nearby and carrying naloxone when using opioids can save lives.

Support and services

Needle and syringe programs (NSPs): free sterile equipment, safe disposal and harm reduction advice are available at NSPs. These are, often at pharmacies, community health centres and hospitals.

Caring for your body

Protect your veins: rotate injection sites and avoid sore, bruised or inflamed veins to allow healing.

Aftercare: apply gentle pressure with clean cotton or gauze after injecting. Wait until wounds close before using creams.

Managing missed hits: missed veins can cause swelling or pain. Warm compresses may help healing and circulation.

Stay hydrated and nourished: hydration, nutrition and rest support healing.



Contact us for support

If you're struggling with alcohol or other drugs, we're here for you.

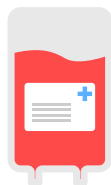
We offer a variety of community and residential programs throughout Queensland and New South Wales, helping thousands of people every year to navigate alcohol and drug challenges and move forward in life.

 **1300 727 957**

liveslivedwell.org.au 

Safety considerations

Blood-borne viruses



Sharing or reusing equipment increases the risk of getting HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C. Regular testing and vaccinations (for hep B) are recommended.

Vein and tissue damage



Repeated injecting can cause collapsed veins, scarring, ulcers and circulation issues.

Overdose risks



Drug contents can be unpredictable. Reagent testing and/or a test shot with a new supply can help reduce overdose risk.

Skin and soft-tissue infections



Missed shots, dirty equipment, or unfiltered drugs can cause abscesses, cellulitis and sepsis.

Remember:

The effects of any substance can vary based on individual factors, environment, tolerance, and purity.

No dose is completely without risk. When possible, start low and go slow, avoid using alone, and take steps to care for yourself and others.

