

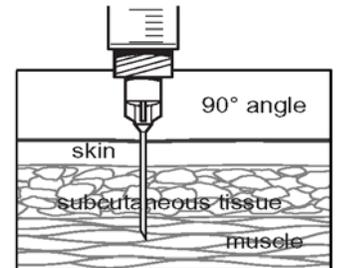


## How to Give Yourself a Testosterone Intramuscular (IM) Injection

You can give yourself Intramuscular (IM) injections at home safely and accurately with proper care and technique. This handout will guide you through the steps to give yourself an injection, identify safe locations for the injections, and identify where to dispose of your used needles. If you have any questions, please call the office at **614-293-8155**.

### What is an Intramuscular (IM) Injection?

An **intramuscular injection** is a technique used to deliver a medication deep into the muscle. This allows the medication to be absorbed into the bloodstream quickly. IM injections are given at a 90 degree angle.



### Setting up for the injection:

- Find a clean, well lit work place.
- Remove the medication from the refrigerator and let it reach room temperature.
- Check the expiration date on the vial.
- Do not use medications with particles, discolored, broken, or is expired.

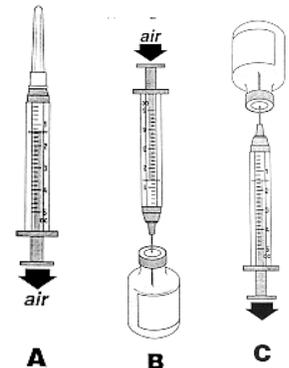
### Assemble supplies:

- Medication vial.
- Disposable syringe and needles.
- Alcohol swabs.
- Puncture proof disposable container.



### How to draw up the medication:

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
2. Screw a needle on the syringe hub unless your syringe comes with a needle already attached.
3. Vial: Flip off the plastic top. Use an alcohol swab and wipe that area well using outward circular motion for 10 seconds.
4. Remove the needle cover. To draw air into the syringe, pull the plunger back to the correct volume prescribed by your physician. (Diagram A)
5. Insert the needle straight into the vial through the rubber top. Inject air into the bottle by pushing down on the plunger. (Diagram B)
6. Using one hand, turn the vial with the syringe upside down. Be sure the needle is in the bottle and below the fluid level. Draw back the plunger to the correct dosage prescribed by your physician (Diagram C)
7. Check for air bubbles in the syringe. Bubbles can be removed by flicking the syringe with your finger. If the air bubble is at the top of the syringe, push gently on the plunger so the air goes back to the bottle. Before removing the needle, be sure you have the proper amount in the syringe.
8. Remove the needle from the vial. It is OK to put the cover on the needle for a short time. Be very careful not to stick yourself. Never place the syringe with uncovered needle on the surface you are working on.



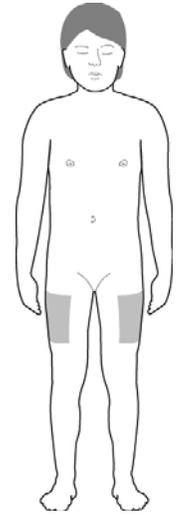
**Note:** You should not inject more than 3 mL at one site. If the amount is more than 3 mL, then divide the drug solution into two equal volumes and inject at two different sites. For example, your dose is 5 mL. Use 2 syringes with 2.5 mL in each one and inject the medicine at 2 different sites.



### Selecting the location:

Intramuscular injections are given into a muscle. To give yourself an injection you will use your thigh.

Use the middle outer part of the thigh to inject. The best area is one hand length below the hip and one hand length above the knee. See the shaded area on the figure.



### Giving the Injection:

1. Clean the injection site skin with an alcohol swab; let it air dry.
2. Spread the skin at the site between your thumb and index finger using your left hand if you are right-handed or your right hand if you are left-handed (non-dominant hand). It will be helpful if you have an alcohol swab or clean gauze ready to cover the site once you have pulled the needle out.
3. With your dominant hand, insert the IM needle into the muscle at a 90 degree angle (straight up and down) with one quick and firm motion.
4. After inserting the needle into the muscle take your hand off the skin. Gently pull back on the plunger of the syringe to check for blood.
5. Supporting the syringe with your non-dominant hand, pull the plunger slightly with your dominant hand to check for blood unless your health care provider has told you this step is not needed. **If blood is seen in the syringe, do not inject the medicine and take the syringe out and throw it away in a Sharps container.** Put gentle pressure on the site with the alcohol wipe or gauze for 30 seconds. You can massage gently. **Start over** with steps 2-9 to draw up a new dose of medicine and **inject at a new site.**
6. If you do not see any blood in the needle, you can complete the injection by pushing the medication slowly into the muscle. You may feel some burning or pressure as the medicine enters your muscle.
7. When you finish injecting the full dose of the medication into the muscle, remove the needle. Gently press an alcohol swab on the injection site. Hold pressure on site until there is no bleeding. You can place a band aid on injection site if needed.
8. Throw away the needle and syringe in the Sharps container. **Do not recap the needle!**
9. Do not give yourself an injection in the same place every time. You may want to use your left thigh one time and your right thigh the next. It may be helpful to write down the site where you gave your last injection and the date. This way you can make sure you always use a different site.



### Tips for Reducing Injection Pain:

- Inject medicine that is at room temperature.
- Remove all air bubbles from the syringe before injection.
- Let the skin dry after using alcohol wipes before injecting.
- Keep the muscles in the injection area relaxed.
- Break through the skin quickly with the needle.
- Don't change the direction of the needle as it goes in or comes out.
- Do not reuse disposable needles.

### Sharp Disposal:

Please contact: contact the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency ([www.epa.state.oh.us/](http://www.epa.state.oh.us/)) Division of Solid and Infectious Waste Management ([www.epa.state.oh.us/dsiwm/](http://www.epa.state.oh.us/dsiwm/)) or call (614) 644-2621.