

Safer injection tips:

Injecting

- The most dangerous place to inject is your neck
- To make your veins more visible: jog on the spot or do push-ups before tying off
- If you can't see the bevel, look for the numbers on the side of your needle, they often line up with the bevel
- Try to save one vein for medical use (when you need bloodwork or an IV)
- Rotate your injection sites to give them time to heal

Filters

- Use a sterifilt FAST filter if you have one. They take getting used to but remove more fillers. They don't steal your drugs.
- Unscented tampons are safe to use as filters – do not use cigarette filters
- Use a filter once only – using it more than once can lead to “cotton fever”

Ties

- Ties should be on for two minutes maximum
- If your hand falls asleep or arm turns red while tied off, the tie is too tight, or has been on too long

Abscesses and wounds

- Keep injection sites clean and watch for abscesses – they can happen anywhere on the body, not just where you inject
- If you have an abscess, do not pop it
- Seek medical care for treatment of abscesses or wounds – they can lead to dangerous infections

What to do in a Toxic Drug Poisoning (overdose):



Call 9-1-1

- S Stimulate.** Try to wake the person up. If they are unresponsive, call 911.
- A Airway.** Make sure there is nothing in the mouth, tilt head back to open airway.
- V Ventilate.** Plug the nose, tilt the head back and give one breath every 5 seconds.
- E Evaluate.** Are they breathing on their own? If not, prepare naloxone.
- M Medication.** Inject one dose (1cc) of naloxone.
- E Evaluate and support.** Is the person breathing? Naloxone usually takes effect in 3-5 minutes. If the person is not breathing on their own in 5 minutes, give another dose of naloxone.



Get naloxone training.

Ready to stop using?

Help is just a phone call away.

Call Access Central at **1-866-658-1221**, seven days a week from 9:00am to 7:45pm for withdrawal management (aka “detox”), residential addiction services and addiction housing.



Don't use alone! Use at an Overdose Prevention Site (OPS). Scan the QR to find your nearest one.



Need health support? The Overdose Outreach Team (OOT) can help you with substance use care and support. Call **604-360-2874** seven days a week, 8:00am to 8:00pm for help in the VCH region (including Vancouver, Sunshine Coast, North Shore, and Sea to Sky).



Virtual Overdose Prevention
If you're alone, use a phone app like Lifeguard or Brave, or call NORS line **1-888-688-NORS** for virtual overdose prevention.

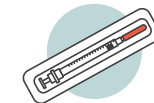


Toxic Drug Alerts
Text “**JOIN**” to **253787** to get alerts and watch for drug alerts on posters and websites.

For more copies, go online at vch.eduhealth.ca or email pheh@vch.ca and quote Catalogue No. **DB.500.S34**
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Safer Injecting

Supplies you will need to inject safer:



STERILE SYRINGE



STERILE WATER



ALCOHOL SWABS



LIGHTER OR CANDLE



COOKER OR SPOON



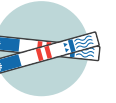
RUBBER TIE



STERIFILT FAST OR OTHER STERILE FILTER



ASCORBIC ACID/VITAMIN C



FENTANYL TEST STRIP



NALOXONE KIT

Your peers created this harm reduction pamphlet for you. **Be safe.**

Steps for safer injecting:

Before you start:

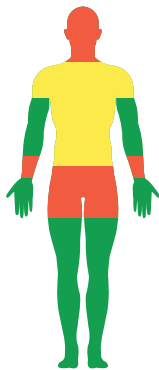
- **Test your drugs** before you use
- **Never use alone**
- **Use a new supplies** for each injection
- **Use a little** first to see how strong it is
- **Be extra careful when your tolerance is low.** When you have stopped using, your tolerance goes down quickly.
- Be aware there are **benzos** in the unregulated drug supply. Benzos can complicate overdose, lead to prolonged unconsciousness, memory loss, and dangerous withdrawal
- **Always dispose of your equipment safely**

1 Clean your hands with soap and water, hand sanitizer, or alcohol swabs.



2 Choose your injection site.

- **Green** areas are safer.
- Try to avoid **yellow** areas.
- **Red** areas are dangerous.



3 Prepare your drugs.

3A. FENTANYL

- 1 Pour drugs into cooker/spoon
- 2 Pour sterile water into cooker/spoon
- 3 Heat until drug becomes liquid

3B. COCAINE, CRYSTAL METH:

- 1 Pour drugs into cooker/spoon
- 2 Pour sterile water into cooker/spoon
- 3 Using the back of a clean, capped needle, grind drugs to mix
- 4 Check drug using a fentanyl test strip

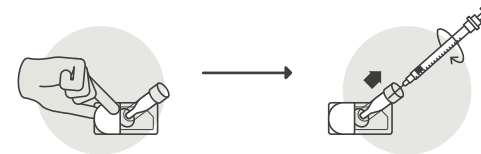
3C. CRACK COCAINE:

- 1 Put crack and ascorbic acid into cooker. Ascorbic acid makes crack dissolve in water. Pour in just enough to dissolve the crack. Use as little as possible as it can be hard on veins.
- 2 Pour sterile water into cooker/spoon. using the back of a clean, capped needle, grind crack and ascorbic acid to mix.
- 3 If crack mixture is cloudy or has sediment, heat as needed – DO NOT BOIL. Cook for 10 seconds to kill germs.
- 4 Check drug using a fentanyl test strip

4 Filter your drugs.

4A. STERIFILT FAST

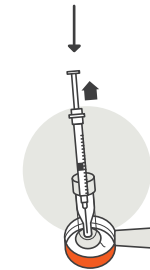
These new filters are meant for injections. They don't steal your drugs.



Peel open package halfway. Leave filter in packaging and don't touch it.

Connect sterifilt to syringe by twisting gently but firmly. You will hear a click. Do not push needle against sides of filter.

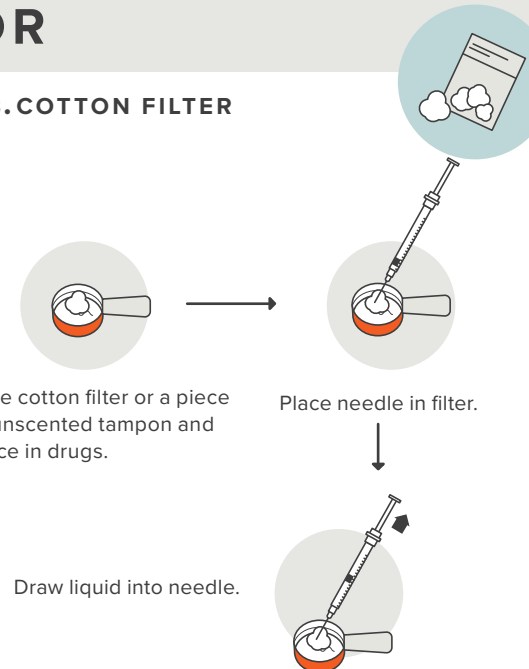
Place filter into cooker without touching the bottom. Pull on syringe plunger slowly to avoid air bubbles. Remove filter from your syringe to get ready to inject.



OR

4B. COTTON FILTER

Take cotton filter or a piece of unscented tampon and place in drugs.

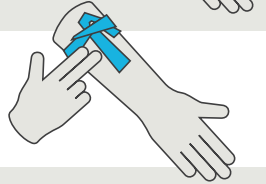


Draw liquid into needle.

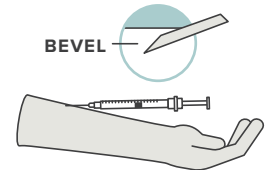
5 Clean your injection site with an alcohol swab.



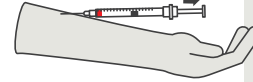
6 Tie off with a rubber tie using a quick release.



7 Insert your needle with the bevel up, towards your heart. Try to go in as flat to your arm as possible.



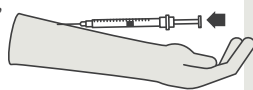
8 Flag your needle: push needle in a little and pull back on plunger until you see blood in the syringe.



9 Loosen your tie.



10 Inject your drug slowly. Stop if you see a "bubble" forming under skin - you have missed the vein.



11 Pull out with clean hands. Apply pressure to injection site using clean gauze. Do not use alcohol swab after injection.



12 Safely dispose of all equipment. Please don't break off the tip of your needle or re-cap it – it's not safe.

