

### Things to get at the Pharmacy:

- ① Allergy syringes (over the counter): 27 or 28 gauge, ½ inch needle, 1 ml capacity
- ② Alcohol wipes
- ③ Sharps container



## SUBCUTANEOUS INJECTION

### Prior to Procedure

- Make sure you have all of the items you will need easily available: syringe, medicine, cleaning materials, etc.
- Wash hands with warm, soapy water. Dry with a clean towel.
- Draw up the correct amount of antigen into the syringe after cleaning the top with alcohol.
- Select a site. Abdomen or thighs are recommended for self-injection. Cleanse the area (about 2 inches) with a fresh alcohol wipe.

### Giving the Subcutaneous Injection

- Remove the needle cap.
- Pinch a 2-inch fold of skin between your thumb and index finger.
- Hold the syringe the way you would a pencil or dart. Insert the needle at about a 45 degree angle to the pinched-up skin. (The needle should be completely covered by skin.)
- Slowly push the plunger all the way down to inject the medicine.
- Remove the needle from the skin.
- If there is bleeding at the site of injection, apply a bandage.
- Immediately put the syringe and needle into a container that is puncture-proof.
- Find out what services are available in your area for disposing of biological waste.

### General Injection Tips

- Change your injection site in a regular pattern for comfort. This may not be necessary for you with weekly injections.

### Will It Hurt?

- The needles for sub-Q injection are very thin and short, so pain is usually minimal. You may have some soreness later. Minor bruising may happen occasionally, but it is nothing to worry about.

### Tips for Minimizing Injection Pain

- Remove all air bubbles from the syringe before injection.
- Break through the skin quickly.
- Do not change the direction of the needle as it goes in or comes out.
- Do not reuse disposable needles.

### When to Call Your Doctor

Contact your doctor if any of the following occurs:

- The injection site continues to bleed.
- There is a lot of pain.
- You inject the medicine into the wrong area.
- You get a rash around the injection site. Some redness is normal with allergy injections.
- You develop a fever or experience signs of allergic reaction.

In case of an emergency, **CALL 911**. For questions, please call Sandra Stufflebeam, allergy tech, at (206) 682-6103.

## How can I dispose of the needles, syringes or lancets I use at home for personal reasons?

In King County there are options for disposing of sharps generated from personal use. The options differ somewhat depending on where you live. When properly prepared for disposal, home-generated sharps are exempt from the regulations that govern disposal of commercial biomedical waste. Proper preparation and disposal are important to avoid injury to yourself and others.

**Always** place used sharps and syringes in a **safe container**. This can be a **manufactured sharps container** or a **2-liter P.E.T. plastic pop bottle**. You can purchase manufactured sharps containers at most pharmacies. Whether you use a sharps container or a pop bottle, make sure the lid fits tightly. Then tape it shut for added safety. If you use a plastic pop bottle, label it with the warning: "SHARPS, DO NOT RECYCLE."

- **Do not break the needle off from the syringe.** Needles can carry HIV, hepatitis and other germs. If the needle gets broken off from a syringe you have personally used, pull the plunger out of the barrel, put the needle in the barrel, and then replace the plunger. ***Please, do not flush needles or syringes down the toilet!***
- **In the City of Seattle**, it is **illegal** to dispose of needles, lancets and syringes in your regular garbage can or recycling container. Put the items in a **safe container** (as described above), seal it, then take the container to Seattle's North or South Recycling and Disposal Station. Station staff will direct you to the proper disposal area. Only one container is allowed per trip. Your container will not be returned to you. The Recycling and Disposal Stations DO NOT accept loose needles and syringes.

**North Transfer Station:** 1350 N 34th St, Seattle, WA 98103

**South Transfer Station:** 130 South Kenyon Street, Seattle, Washington 98108

**Syringe drop boxes** are available 24 hours a day at the following locations:

- **Auburn Public Health Center**  
901 Auburn Way North, Suite A, Auburn
- **Downtown Public Health Center**  
2124 4th Avenue, Seattle
- **Eastgate Public Health Center**  
14350 SE Eastgate Way, Bellevue
- **Federal Way Public Health Center**  
33431 13th Place S, Federal Way

## Can I return used needles and syringes to my pharmacy or doctor?

Some pharmacies will dispose of used injection supplies for you if they are safely stored in an approved manufactured sharps container. There is usually a fee for this service. Ask your pharmacist if she or he provides this service.

Minor & James Surgical Specialists **does not allow** patients to return used injection equipment to the provider's office.