



Injection Safety: What Every Health Care Provider Needs to Know



Colorado Department
of Public Health
and Environment

Health care providers are responsible for making sure
every injection they give is safe.

Did you know...

In the last decade, *more than 125,000 patients* in the United States were advised to get tested for hepatitis B virus, hepatitis C virus and HIV due to the reuse of syringes and misuse of medication vials. Unsafe injection practices also have resulted in dozens of outbreaks from the transmission of bloodborne pathogens. Learn what **you** can do to ensure that every patient is safe when receiving an injection.

Colorado's Medical Injection Safety Campaign is a collaborative public health initiative to raise awareness among patients and health care providers about safe injection practices. Do your part to ensure injection safety *at all times!*

What is Injection Safety?

Injection safety, or safe injection practices, refers to the measures taken to perform injections in the safest manner possible for patients, health care providers, and others. This involves the correct use of administering injections and preparing drugs, and is intended to prevent transmission of infectious diseases between patients, between a patient and health care provider, and also to prevent harms such as needlestick injuries.

Why is Injection Safety important?

Despite the recommendations for safe medical injection practices, disease transmission and outbreaks resulting from unsafe injection practices still occur from health care workers failing to adhere to basic infection control practices, standard precautions and basic injection safety practices. Since the transmission of bloodborne pathogens from unsafe injection practices is preventable, maintaining basic levels of patient safety and provider protections is critical.

Three things every provider needs to know about injection safety:



Needles and syringes are single use devices. They never should be used for more than one patient, even if the needle is changed or if the needle and syringe are reused to draw up additional medication for the same patient.



Never enter a vial, bag or bottle with a used syringe or needle.



Never administer medications from a single-dose vial or IV bag to multiple patients. Limit the use of multi-dose vials whenever possible.

How can health care providers ensure injections are performed correctly?

To make certain all health care personnel understand and adhere to safe injection practices, the CDC recommends the following:

- ✓ Review medication preparation and administration procedures with staff and colleagues
- ✓ Designate someone to provide ongoing oversight for infection control issues
- ✓ Develop written infection control policies
- ✓ Provide training
- ✓ Conduct quality assurance assessments

Source: Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
http://www.cdc.gov/injectionsafety/providers/provider_faqs.html

Only One Needle, Only One Syringe, and *Only One* Time!

Injection Safety is Every Health Care Provider's Responsibility



Injection Safety Guidelines from the CDC:

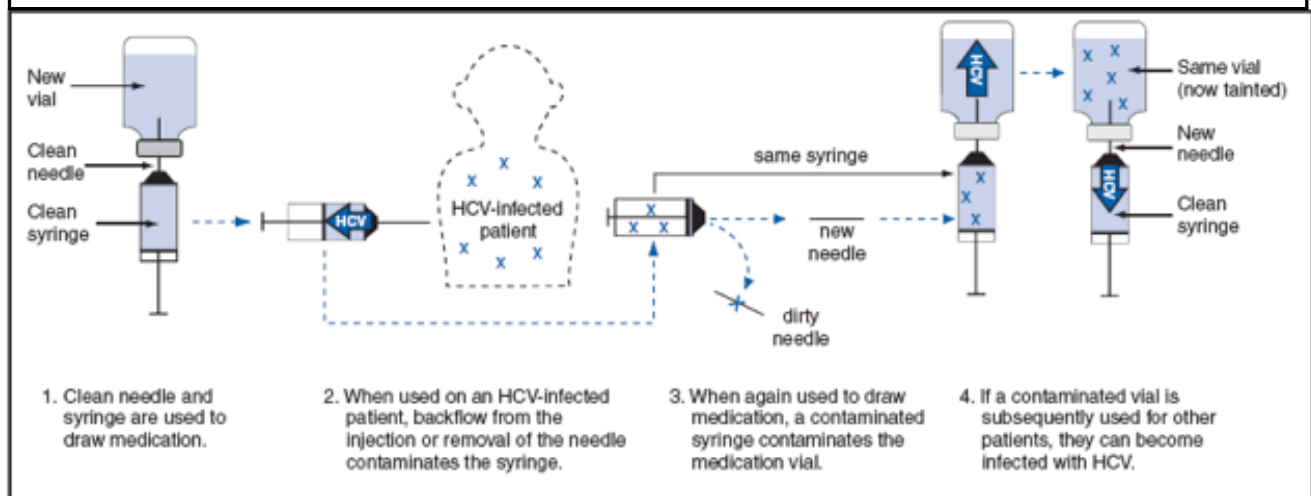
- Never administer medications from the same syringe to more than one patient, even if the needle is changed. Once they are used, the syringe and needle both are contaminated and must be discarded. Always use a new sterile syringe and needle for each patient.
- After a syringe or needle has been used to enter or connect to a patient's IV, it is contaminated and should not be used on another patient or to enter a medication vial.
- Never enter a vial, bag or bottle with a used syringe or needle.
- Never use medications packaged as single-dose or single-use for more than one patient. This includes ampoules, bags and bottles of intravenous solutions.
- Limit the use of multi-dose vials whenever possible.
- Do not use bags or bottles of intravenous solution as a common source of supply for more than one patient.
- Do not combine (pool) leftover contents of single-dose vials or store single-dose vials for later use. Single-dose vials are intended for use on a single patient for a single case/procedure.
- Follow proper infection control practices and always use aseptic technique during the preparation and administration of injected medications.

(Adapted from: Guideline for isolation precautions: preventing transmission of infectious agents in health care settings 2007. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, CDC; 2007. Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/hicpac/pdf/isolation/isolation2007.pdf>)

Unsafe Injection Practices Can Result in Disease Transmission

Reuse of syringes can transmit infectious diseases such as hepatitis C virus (HCV). The syringe does not have to be used on multiple patients for this to occur.

Adapted from: MMWR 2008;57(19):513-517



To find out more information about injection safety, refer to:

- CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/injectionsafety/>
- One and Only Campaign: <http://www.oneandonlycampaign.org/>
- Pugliese G, Gosnell C, Bartley JM, Robinson S. Injection Practices Among Clinicians in United States Health Care Settings. *Am J Infect Control* 2010;38(10):789-798.

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Developed by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
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