

IF YOU GET A NEEDLE STICK INJURY

If you get pricked by a discarded needle and syringe (often referred to as a 'needle stick injury'), the following steps should be taken:

- + Flush the injured area with flowing water
- + Wash the wound well with soap and warm water
- + Dry the wound and apply a waterproof dressing
- + Seek medical attention for an assessment of the risk of infection and appropriate treatment
- + If the needle and syringe cannot be retrieved, mark the area so others are not at risk, and contact the Disposal Helpline.



Flush the area with flowing water



Dry and apply a waterproof dressing

DISPOSAL HELPLINE

Freecall 1800 552 355
Information and support
24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Accessible format

To receive this publication in an accessible format:
Phone 1300 365 482, using the National Relay Service (TTY) 13 36 77 if required.
Email nsp.orders@dhs.vic.gov.au

PDF format

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WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND A DISCARDED NEEDLE



IF YOU FIND A DISCARDED NEEDLE AND SYRINGE

The risk of contracting HIV (the virus that can cause AIDS) or other blood-borne viruses by injuring yourself with a needle and syringe is very low.

The following steps will help you to safely retrieve and dispose of inappropriately discarded needles and syringes.

SAFELY RETRIEVE AND DISPOSE OF DISCARDED NEEDLES AND SYRINGES

Assess the location

Assess if the needle and syringe is in a place where it can be easily removed.

If you need help

If you do not want to dispose of the needle and syringe yourself or if it is in an awkward place to reach, contact the Disposal Helpline for more information or to arrange for it to be removed.

Disposal Helpline

1800 552 355

24 hours a day. Seven days a week.

IF YOU DECIDE TO REMOVE THE NEEDLE AND SYRINGE YOURSELF

Wear Gloves

Wear latex or plastic gloves for protection. Thick gloves, such as gardening gloves, make it difficult to pick up the needle and syringe.

Get a disposal container

Take an approved disposal container and lid to the site. These containers are available from all Needle and Syringe Programs and most local councils.

If you do not have one, use a hard plastic container such as an empty detergent bottle.

Do not use glass bottles as these can break.

Clear access

If the needle and syringe is difficult to reach, carefully remove rubbish or other material around it so that you have direct access to it.

Separate multiple syringes

If there is more than one needle and syringe, separate them using a stick, tongs or the end of a broom. Do this carefully. Each needle and syringe can then be picked up individually.

Pick up the syringe

Pick up the needle and syringe by the barrel (plastic end). Do not pick it up by the needle end. Make sure the needle is pointing away from you.

Never recap a needle and syringe, even if the cap has also been discarded

Place the needle and syringe, needle end first, into the container. The container should be on a stable surface and not held by hand.

Secure the lid on the container.

Clean up

Take off the gloves and put them in a plastic bag. Tie a knot at the end of the bag and place it in a rubbish bin.

Wash your hands with soap and water.

Dispose of the container

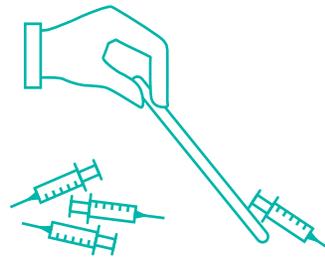
To dispose of the container, take it to your local Needle and Syringe Program or council office or contact the Disposal Helpline (1800 552 355) for further advice.

Do not

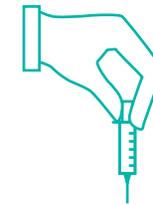
Do not dispose of needles and syringes in rubbish bins, drains, toilets, recycle or sanitary bins.



Use an approved disposal container



Separate multiple syringes with a long stick



Handle by the barrel and never recap



Wash your hands with soap and water