

How to Give Yourself a Hormone Injection: Subcutaneous (SQ), ppgoh.org/genderaffirmingcare

THESE MEDICATIONS ARE GIVEN SQ

- Testosterone cypionate*
- Testosterone enanthate*
*can also be given via intramuscular injection (IM)

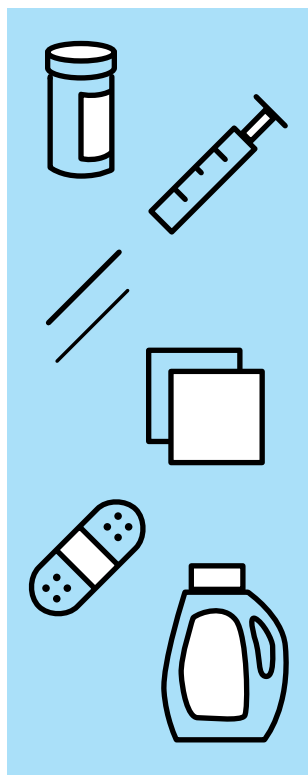
WHAT IS A SQ INJECTION?

An injection that places the medication in the subcutaneous tissue right below the skin, this allows the medication to absorb more slowly than an IM injection.

- Be sure to **wash your hands before starting**, and have a clean and stable workspace.

1) SUPPLIES

- Medication in a vial
- One disposable syringe
- Two needles
 - One 21-23 gauge, 1-1.5" for drawing up medication
 - One 23-25 gauge, 5/8" for injecting medication)
- Two alcohol wipes or a couple cotton balls and alcohol
- Bandaid
- Any hard sided plastic container with a lid. You may use laundry detergent or other hard-sided plastic household containers as a sharps container.



2) PREPARE MEDICATION

- Check to confirm the correct medication¹, strength², and expiration date³.
- Check for floaters or visible particles.
- Roll the medication vial in your hands to warm it up.



3) PREPARE SYRINGE

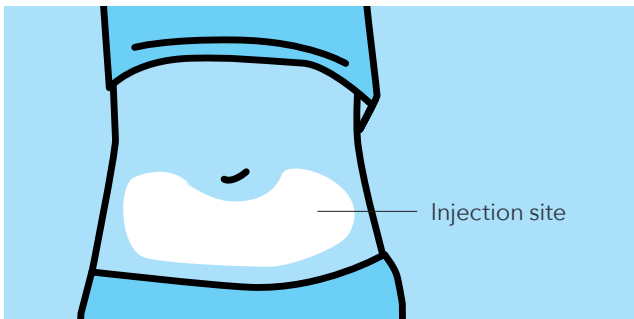
- **Don't let the needles touch any surfaces.**
- The first time you use the vial, remove the cap (the cap gets thrown away) on the vial to reveal the rubber stopper.
- Wipe off the rubber stopper of medication vial with alcohol and allow it to air dry.
- Open the syringe and screw the needle onto it.
- Pull back the safety (or cap). This is needle dependent and your needle may or may not have a safety.
- Pull air back into the syringe (the same amount that is the medication amount).
- Put the needle into the vial and turn the vial upside down.
- Inject air into the vial, pull back the plunger to the medication amount, check for bubbles, and tap the syringe to remove them.
- Turn the vial right side up, and remove the needle from the vial. Put the safety back on the needle if applicable.
- Remove the needle from the syringe and place it in the sharps container.
- Put a new needle on the syringe. Don't touch the end of the syringe or needle where they connect.

4) SELECT AND PREPARE INJECTION SITE

- Option A: Abdomen (figure 1)
- Option B: Top of thigh (figure 2)
- Be sure to rotate sites.

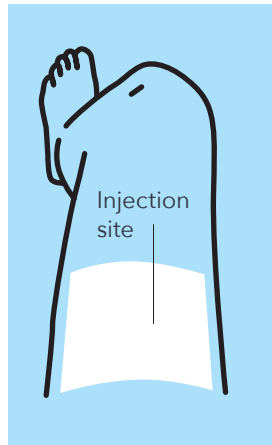
Option A: Abdomen (figure 1)

- Select an area at least one inch away from your belly button, but not above your belly button.
- Wipe your skin with an alcohol pad and allow it to air dry.
- Pinch your skin and insert the needle at either a 45 or 90 degree angle (figure 3).
- Push the plunger to inject the medication and pull the needle out of your skin.

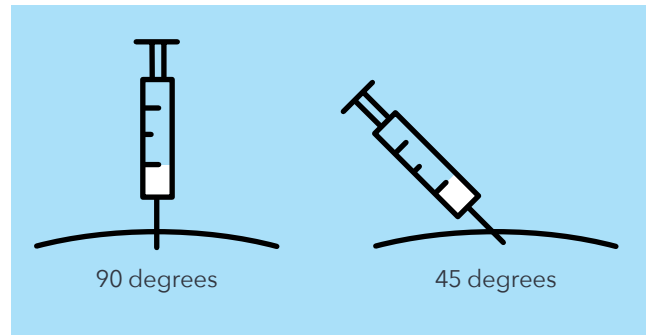


Option B: Top of thigh (figure 2)

- Select an area in the upper third of your thigh.
- Wipe your skin with an alcohol pad and allow it to air dry.
- Pinch your skin and insert the needle at either a 45 degree or 90 degree angle (figure 3).
- Push the plunger to inject the medication and pull the needle out of your skin.



(figure 3)



5) DISPOSAL

- Dispose of the needle and syringe in the sharps container, and apply your a band-aid.
- When the vial is empty, place it in the sharps container.
- When the sharps container is full, tape the lid and throw it in the trash.

TIPS FOR REDUCING INJECTION PAIN

- Never reuse needles.
- Use separate drawing up and injecting needles.
- Let your skin dry fully from the alcohol wipes before injecting.
- Ice the area before applying alcohol wipes to numb the area.
- Keep the muscle in the injection area warm and relaxed.
- Inject the medication when it's at room temperature.
- Break through the skin quickly with the needle.
- Insert the needle straight into the skin and pull it out again without wiggling or changing its direction.