

*Further information*

For further information contact your local  
government Environmental Health Officer

Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS)  
Telephone: (08) 9442 5000 (metropolitan)  
Or toll free: 1800 198 024 (non-metropolitan)

Communicable Disease Control Directorate  
Telephone: (08) 9388 4999  
Email: [cdc@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:cdc@health.wa.gov.au)  
<http://www.population.health.wa.gov.au>

*Safe Disposal  
of Needles  
and Syringes*

Department of Health  
Government of Western Australia

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Population Health Division

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## Safe Disposal of Needles and Syringes



*Needle and syringe distribution and exchange programs have been established to reduce the spread of infections such as hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV among injecting drug users.*

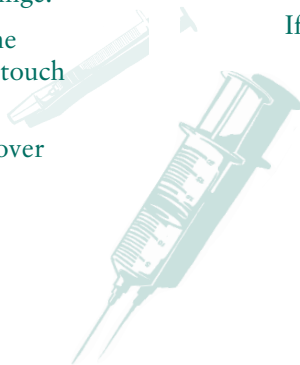


*Sometimes needles and syringes are discarded improperly rather than exchanged or disposed of in appropriate containers. This can create concern for people in the community who find them.*

*While the risk of catching HIV or other diseases through injuring yourself with a discarded needle is extremely low, it is important to take care by following these steps when handling and disposing of them.*

### What to do if you find a discarded needle and syringe

1. Do not be alarmed.
2. Get a container with a well-secured lid, preferably screw top.  
Rigid plastic containers with lids are best (e.g. plastic milk, juice or soft drink bottles with a screw top lid). Avoid using glass, which can shatter, or aluminium that can be squashed.
3. Bring the container to the needle and syringe.
4. Pick up the used needle and syringe by the blunt end, away from the point. Do not touch the sharp point.
5. Do not try to put the plastic protective cover back on a needle if it has fallen off.



6. Put the needle and syringe, point first, into the container. More than one can be placed in the container, but do not overfill. Do not carry the needle and syringe unless it is in a suitable container.
7. Make sure the container is tightly sealed.
8. Put the sealed container in a domestic rubbish bin (mobile green bin). Do not put needles and syringes down toilets or drains.



### What to do if you injure yourself with a discarded needle

- ☼ Wash the area gently with soap and running tap water as soon as possible.
- ☼ Apply an antiseptic and a clean dressing.
- ☼ Obtain prompt medical advice from your local doctor or hospital emergency department, preferably within 24 hours.
- ☼ Place the needle in a rigid plastic container and take it with you to your doctor.

### Remember

Do not panic, take reasonable care and follow the above steps.

Tell children never to pick up a needle, but to tell an adult.

### Problem Areas

If you are regularly finding needles and syringes in a particular area, please contact your local government Environmental Health Officer.

