

Crohn's disease comes with needles: from blood tests,

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Crohn's disease comes with needles: From blood tests, to nutrition therapy and injected medications, if you have this diagnosis you become well acquainted with the alcohol swab and sterile sharp. Some people are comfortable self-injecting after receiving training from their health care provider, while others would rather have the help of a medical practitioner through clinic or home visits. Regardless of your preference, there are things to know to improve your injection treatment experience.

1. Have your supplies ready. Preparation is important. If you are self-injecting, have everything you need on hand before you begin:
 - Pre-filled medication syringe
 - Alcohol swab, to clean injection site
 - Sharps disposal container
 - Cotton ball, to apply pressure to site after syringe removal
 - Band-Aid (optional)If your medication has been refrigerated, let it sit at room temperature for about 30 minutes so that it's not cold when you use it.

2. Check everything. Don't assume everything is automatically as it should be. Check the expiration date and dose on your medication. Examine the syringe to ensure that it's not broken. Look at the condition of the medication and watch for unusual coloration, sediment or cloudiness.
3. Choose the right injection site.

Your medication injection is subcutaneous, which means it's not going directly into your bloodstream. Instead, the purpose of the injection is to leave the medication in the fatty layer between your skin and muscle where it will slowly be absorbed. The best place for subcutaneous injections are the tops of your thighs, your abdomen and the outer portion of your upper arms.

If you choose your abdomen, avoid the two inch radius around your belly button. Avoid areas of skin that have damage including tenderness, scarring, redness and bruising, or that are hard or have stretchmarks. 4.

Rotate your injection locations. For each new injection, choose a site that's different from the previous. It doesn't have to be on a completely different body part, but it should be at least one inch away from where you got your last injection. If you don't rotate, you are more likely to bruise and develop scar tissue. 5. Practice pain reduction. Try applying ice to the injection site prior to the injection to reduce the pain and stinging.

Ice can also reduce post-treatment bruising by shrinking capillaries that may be punctured by the needle. Let the alcohol-swabbed area dry completely before inserting the needle into the skin. Choose a syringe over an auto-injector pen. A syringe plunger can be pressed slowly, which reduces the pain associated with injection.

Anxiety can make pain worse, so try a calming ritual before your injection treatment. If you self-inject at home, this could be a warm bath and soothing music. If you go to a clinic, try breathing exercises that target anxiety. 6.

Prioritize safety. Ensure your injection site is swabbed with alcohol prior to the injection. Your practitioner should wear gloves, or if you're self-injecting, wash your hands first. The needle should be placed directly into the sharps disposal container immediately after it's removed from your skin. Any attempt to replace the cap can put the user at risk for a needle poke and

should not be attempted. 7. Monitor side effects. Medication often has side effects.

Some are of no concern, and others should be checked by a doctor. Side effects that you may experience include itching, redness, swelling, pain and bruising. You also may experience fever, headache, chills and hives. Ask your doctor when you should be concerned, and monitor your injection site and overall wellbeing for any changes of note. Infection is another side effect of Crohn's medication, since the treatment of this condition involves reducing immune system activity.

Make sure your vaccinations are up to date and inform your doctor right away if you show any signs of infection. The Takeaway Injections are a big part of the treatment of Crohn's disease. Many people with Crohn's choose to self-inject once they've been trained by their health care provider. You can too, or you can choose to have your injections administered by a nurse or doctor. Regardless of your decision, knowing what to expect can help you feel less anxious about needles, and once you've had some experience, treatments get easier.