

Proper Use and Disposal of Needles and Syringes Be Smart. Be Careful. Be Aware. Be Safe. If you're one of the many people in Massachusetts who uses syringes to manage your health care at home, here's what you need to know about the safe use and disposal of needles, syringes and lancets (sharps).

Sale and Possession of Hypodermic Syringes and Needles in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts: (M.G.L. chapter 94C, sections 27, 27A and 32L) Individuals 18 years and older may legally purchase syringes and needles from a pharmacy without a prescription Disposal of syringes must be done safely and responsibly. **State Sanitary Code: (M.G.L. chapter 111, section 127A)** Improper disposal of infectious or physically dangerous medical or biological waste may result in penalties of up to \$25,000 or two years in a corrections facility. *Massachusetts Department of Public Health – February 2016*

Be Smart. Use a Sharps Container.

A sharps container is a single-use container that is filled with used medical needles and then disposed of safely. These can be purchased at pharmacies, medical supply stores or ordered through the mail. If you do not have access to a sharps container, place sharps in a puncture resistant container such as a rigid plastic bottle or coffee can with a secure cap. These items must be disposed of at a drop off site or through a medical mail back service.

DO Visit a medical supply store to purchase sharps containers.

DO Check out these sharps mail back services. They provide a variety of container sizes and prepaid mailing cartons:

Medasend: 800-200-3581

Stericycle: 800-355-8773

DO NOT Put sharps in the household trash. As of July 1, 2012, medical waste regulations do not allow the disposal of sharps in household garbage. Take your filled sharps container to the sharps disposal (drop-off) site in your community. Sharps disposal programs may be ongoing or provided on specific dates, as determined by your city or town.

Be Careful.

Protect yourself, your community, your environment, and family and friends. The proper disposal of needles and syringes is important!

DO Put used syringes in sharps container immediately.

DO Keep needles away from children and pets.

DO Bring a sharps container when traveling.

DO NOT Throw sharps in the garbage or recycling bins.

DO NOT Flush sharps down the toilet or drop into storm drains.

DO NOT Clip, bend or recap needles.

Be Aware.

Needles, syringes and sharps containers may not be thrown in the garbage or in recycling bins. See the attached list to find a disposal site for your community. If your community is not listed, please contact your local board of health for information.

Be Safe.

Reduce your risk of blood-borne diseases like hepatitis and HIV/AIDS.

DO Use a new needle every time you inject.

DO Clean the injection site with soapy water, alcohol swabs or rubbing alcohol.

DO Find out your HIV/viral hepatitis status. Get tested. If you are not infected you can stay that way. If you are, find out how to take care of yourself and avoid passing HIV/viral hepatitis to others.

DO Clean your sharps with bleach IF you must reuse them.

DO NOT Inject in the same spot over and over again.

DO NOT Share needles, syringes, cookers, cotton or water.

Be Informed.

Resources are just a phone call or click away. All calls are confidential.

Substance Abuse Education and Information Helpline 800-327-5050, TTY: 617-536-587
www.helpline-online.com

Needle Exchange Programs (NEP):

You can dispose of used syringes or exchange them for new, sterile ones at any of these sites. You can also be referred to medical help, drug treatment, or testing for HIV, STDs, or Hepatitis C. Needle Exchange is free.

Boston NEP 800-383-2437 or 617-534-3967

Cambridge NEP 617-599-0246

Holyoke NEP 413-315-3732

Northampton NEP 413-586-0310 or 800-696-7752

Provincetown NEP 508-487-8311

State Agencies:

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) 617-292-5500, TTY:
617- 574-6868 www.mass.gov/dep

Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) 617-624-6000, TTY: 617-624-6001
www.mass.gov/dph

- DPH Bureau of Environmental Health 617-624-5757, TTY: 617-624-5286
www.mass.gov/dph/environmental_health
- DPH Bureau of Substance Abuse Services 617-624-5111, TTY: 617-536-5387
www.mass.gov/dph/bsas
- DPH Diabetes Prevention and Control Program 617-624-5485, TTY: 617-624-5992
www.mass.gov/dph/diabetes
- DPH Office of HIV/AIDS 617-624-5300, TTY: 617-624-5387
www.mass.gov/dph/aids

The Warren Board of Health Office is Now a Sharps Drop Off Location

Sharps must be in an approved sharps container

Stop in or call our office at 436-5708 x 112 with any questions.