

# Needle Safety

People with diabetes use items that puncture the skin also known as “sharps” to check blood sugar and inject insulin. It is important that you safely dispose of insulin syringes, needles, and lancets or any other sharp objects in an approved sharps disposal container.

Syringes, needles, and lancets must be handled carefully and treated as “medical waste”.

- Right after taking your insulin or checking your blood sugar, put the syringe, needle or lancet into your sharps disposal container.
- A sharps disposal container is a heavy-duty plastic or metal box that closes firmly or a heavy-duty plastic bottle with a screw top. You can get a special “sharps container” from your pharmacy.
- Store the container in a safe place in your house, away from children. On top of the refrigerator is a good place.
- When the container is full, close the lid tight. If you are using a home-made container tighten the lid and reinforce it with heavy-duty tape before disposing.
- Some areas may allow you to put the sealed container in the trash. You may want to use a drop box, supervised collection site, or syringe exchange program.
- Check with your local pharmacist for sharps disposal services.



## Syringes or pen needles should be used only once

- New thinner needles are made for single use
- Reused syringes are not sterile

Always check with your healthcare provider before deciding to reuse syringes, needles or lancets.

## **DO NOT:**

- Use a container that will allow the needle to punch through the side
- Use a container made of glass
- Use a container that could end up in the recycling bin
- Put a syringe or lancet directly into household garbage or a trashcan

**NEVER loan a syringe or needle to anyone else or share syringes or needles. You can pass diseases or spread infection by sharing needles.**