

AVOID VACCINE ADMINISTRATION ERRORS

In addition to safe storage conditions, administer vaccines appropriately and safely in order to continue the process of protecting children against diseases. Below are some tips to help ensure vaccines will be administered properly.

When drawing vaccine from a vial, be mindful of the process.

Best Practice	Avoid
Draw vaccine only at time of use.	Pre-drawing vaccines
If you must pre-draw, properly label the syringe.	Improperly labeling vaccines
Follow the vaccine manufacturer's recommended time frame for keeping drawn vaccines.	Leaving vaccines sitting too long between being drawn and used
Use a new syringe and new needle for each vaccination.	Failing to use a sterile syringe and needle for each injection.
Sterilize the vial stopper by thoroughly wiping with alcohol and waiting for it to dry.	Failing to properly sterilize the vial stopper.
The person who draws the vaccine should administer it.	Not having the same person draw and administer the vaccine.

(Based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance)

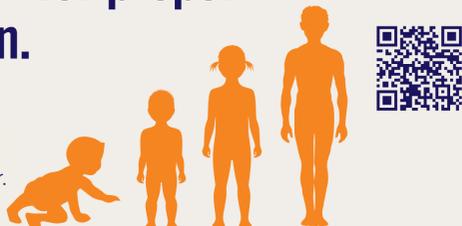
An alternative is to use manufacturer-filled, unit-dose, ready-to-administer prefilled syringes, which:

- Are ready to use. No drawing or vaccine transfer is required.
- Are labeled by the manufacturer, ensuring administration of the right vaccine and better control over recording vaccination information.
- Offer improved work-flow efficiencies for busy clinics.

Follow these 7 “rights” for proper vaccine administration.

1. The right patient

- Verify the patient's name and date of birth before you administer vaccine to him or her.
- Always check for contraindications.



2. The right vaccine or diluent

- Check the vial label three times to be sure you have chosen the correct vaccine product.
- Some vaccines need to be reconstituted.
- A specific diluent will be provided by the manufacturer. It is important to follow manufacturer guidelines in reconstituting the vaccine.



3. The right time

- Check the Recommended Immunization Schedule to ensure you are administering
 - At the correct age
 - At the appropriate interval
 - Before expiration
- Once reconstituted (or drawn up) administer the vaccines within the appropriate time frame.
- In most cases, if not used within 30 minutes, the vaccine will lose its potency and the patient will not be properly protected.



4. The right dosage

- Always make sure you draw the correct amount when drawing from multidose vials.
- Use the entire contents of single dose vials or prefilled syringes.



5. The right route, needle length, and technique

Immunizations are administered through the following routes:

- Intramuscular (IM)—how most immunizations are administered (Figure 1)
 - Multiple immunizations should be a minimum of 1 inch apart.
- Subcutaneous (SQ)—how MMR, varicella, zoster, and MPSV are administered (Figure 2)
 - Multiple immunizations should be a minimum of 1 inch apart.
- Oral—how rotavirus is administered
- Nasal—how some flu vaccines are administered
- Intradermal—how some flu vaccines are administered

Figure 1. Intramuscular (IM)

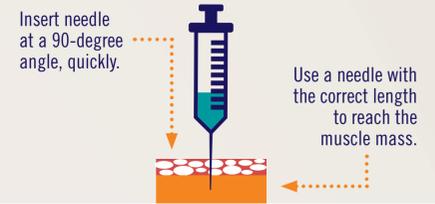
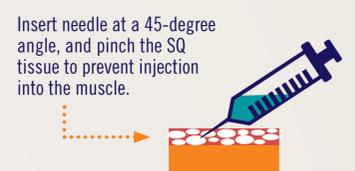


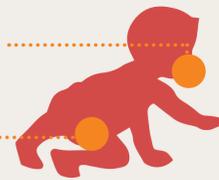
Figure 2. Subcutaneous (SQ)



6. The right site

Children of different sizes and ages will need vaccines administered in different locations on the body.

Infants receive most vaccines in the thigh (some are oral).



Older children receive most vaccines in the deltoid or upper arm.

7. The right documentation

Document the following information in the patient's permanent medical record:



- Vaccine manufacturer
- Lot number
- Date of administration
- Name and business address of health care professional administering the vaccine
- Date that VIS is provided (and its publication date)
- Site (eg, deltoid area)
- Route (eg, intramuscular) of administration
- Expiration date of the vaccine

Two-dimensional barcode scanning is available on most vaccines to save time and avoid documentation errors.

Other important vaccine administration tips

To “Do” List

- ✓ Do use a separate anatomic site for each injection, if possible or space at least 1" apart.
- ✓ Do label vaccines if more than one are drawn up together. This will help in documenting which vaccines were given at which sites.
- ✓ Do ensure that the person who drew up the vaccine administers it. This will reduce errors.
- ✓ Do wash hands between patient encounters and before preparing vaccines.
- ✓ Do wear gloves to administer a vaccine if there is a risk coming into contact with body fluids or you have open sores or cuts on the hands.
- ✓ Do consider immunizations for those with only a mild illness. If children have a moderate or severe illness, reschedule their immunizations.
- ✓ Do always screen for other contraindications.
- ✓ Do use safety syringes to reduce incidence of needle sticks and disease transmission.
- ✓ Do check to see what size needle, route, and location should be used.
- ✓ Do keep separate vaccines in their own syringe. Do not mix separate vaccines in the same syringe.

The Immunization Action Coalition has many helpful resources for proper vaccine administration. Scan the QR codes to see resources that correspond with the tips above.

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