

Penile Injection Therapy

IMPORTANT!

Please read this entire booklet and watch the video listed on **PAGE 4 BEFORE** your appointment with the sexual health clinician. During your appointment, they will review this information with you, answer your questions, and show you how to improve your technique.

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This information will help you learn how to inject medication into your penis. This is called penile injection therapy or intracavernosal injections. Penile injections can help you get an erection if you have erectile dysfunction (ED).

Learning How to do the Injection

Your sexual health clinician will go over these instructions with you during your appointment. You must complete one in-person or virtual training session with a sexual health clinician **before** you do any injections at home on your own. The training session usually takes about one hour.

When you start to inject at home, use these instructions to help you.

Go to <https://youtu.be/Soz-8zRkG2s> to watch the video: Penile Injection Therapy for Erectile Dysfunction.

Once you start injecting, you should see your family doctor at least one time each year. Your doctor will check to make sure your penis is healthy. You can also do regular penis massages to see if there are any changes with how it feels. If you notice your penis is starting to curve or have any hard areas, please contact our clinic.

Medication

Most men start with a medication called “Trimix”. This is a mixture of three medications: Alprostadil, Phentolamine, and Papaverine. Trimix works by relaxing the muscle in the penis. This allows more blood to flow in and causes an erection. Your doctor will decide if Trimix is best for you.

When you need a new prescription call the clinic and you will be instructed on how to get a new prescription.



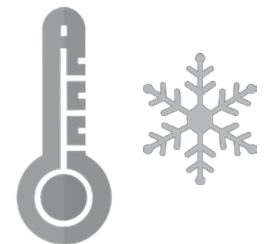
Storing Your Medication

Speak with your pharmacy about the best way to store your medication. Usually, the medication should be kept in the **back of the refrigerator** where it is the coldest. Also, keep the medication away from light by storing it in a container. If you store the medication in the best way, it may last for up to 90 days or more. You should check the expiry date before using it.

Do not use the medication if it:

- **Is cloudy or has chunks floating in it**
- **Has expired (the date on the label has passed)**

When travelling, keep your medication in an insulated pouch with an ice pack. You can also buy the **iCool Prestige** travel pouch available at www.medactiv.ca



Important: If your medication needs to be cold, do not leave it out of your fridge for more than 15 minutes. If your medication gets warm, it may not work properly.

Supplies you will need when injecting the medication:

- One vial of medication
- 30 syringes (29-30 gauge, 8-12.7 mm)
- Pseudoephedrine HCl (Sudafed) tablets
- Alcohol swabs
- Sharps container

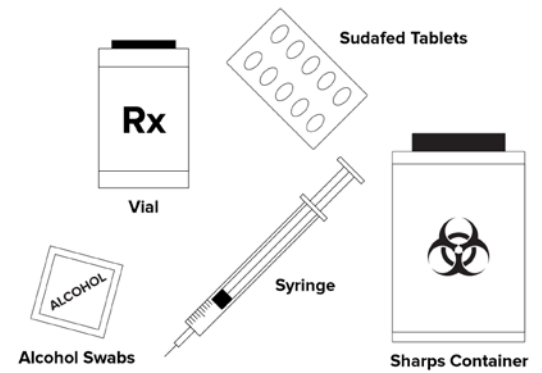


Figure 1: Supplies

Preparing the Injection

1. Prepare a clean surface for supplies by washing a table or counter with soap and water.
2. Wash your hands with soap and water.
3. Get your supplies:
 - » Medication vial
 - » One syringe
 - » One alcohol swab
 - » Sharps container

Drawing up the Medication from the Vial

1. Look at the top of the vial. If there is a cap covering the rubber stopper, take it off and throw it away.
2. Open an alcohol swab. Wipe the rubber stopper on the top of the vial. You must always wipe the rubber stopper with alcohol to remove any bacteria. After wiping, put the alcohol swab on top of the vial until you are ready to draw up the medication.
3. Take the syringe out of its package. Move the plunger up and down a few times. This will loosen the plunger in the barrel of the syringe.
4. Remove the cap from the needle. Be very careful not to let anything touch the needle. If the needle touches anything, please throw the needle away in your sharps container and use a new one. This will help prevent you from getting an infection.
5. Pull the plunger down to fill the syringe with air. You will see the black line of the plunger tip moving along a scale. Pull the plunger down until you see the top of the black line go past the dose you were told to inject.
6. Slowly push the plunger up until the top of the plunger tip is at the dose you were told to inject.

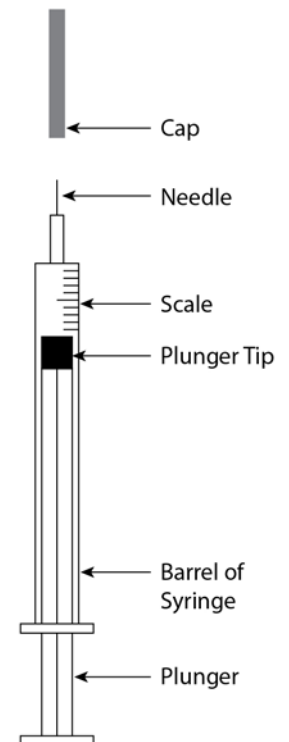


Figure 2: Parts of a syringe

7. Remove the alcohol swab from the top of the vial.
8. Hold the syringe in your hand like you hold a pen or dart. Put your thumb, index finger (first finger) and middle finger (second finger) close to the needle. This will keep the needle from bending as you put it into the rubber stopper. Put the needle through the circle in the center of the rubber stopper on the vial.
9. Push the plunger down and inject the air into the vial (see Figure 3). This step is needed because the vial is pressurized. This means you must replace the amount of medication you remove from the vial with air.

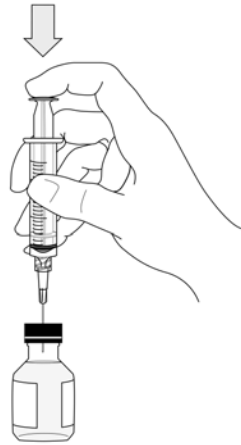


Figure 3: Injecting the air



Figure 4: Withdrawing the medication

10. Turn the vial and syringe upside down (see Figure 4). Hold the syringe with your dominant hand (the hand you use the most). Hold the vial with your other hand. Be careful not to let go of the vial or the needle will bend. Make sure the tip of the needle is in the medication. Turn the syringe so you are looking at the numbers and lines on the syringe.
 11. Pull the plunger down. This will fill the syringe with medication. Pull down until the medication moves past the dose you are supposed to inject. Slowly push the plunger up to the dose prescribed. This will remove air bubbles. Check the amount of medication in the syringe to make sure it is the right dose.
 12. Again, check for air bubbles. If there are air bubbles, pull more medication into the syringe. The bubble will float to the top. Slowly push the air bubbles and the extra medication back into the vial. Look at the syringe again to make sure that you have the right amount of medication.
- Note: Air bubbles will not hurt you. But, they take up room in the syringe. So you will get less medication when you inject.
13. When you have the correct amount, pull the needle out of the vial. Put the cap back on the syringe without touching or bending the needle. If you touch or bend the needle, you will need to throw out the syringe and go back to step 2.

When you put the cap back on the needle, make sure you do not push the plunger by accident. This will push the medication into the cap and you will not get the right dose.

Choosing an Injection Site

You must inject into a specific area of your penis. This is so you do not injure nerves, arteries, or veins. Do not inject straight down on the top or the bottom of the penis.

Imagine that the penis is divided into 2 halves:

1. The first half is from the area closest to the body to the middle of the penis.
2. The second half is from the middle of the penis to the head of the penis.

You will give the injection anywhere in the first half of the penis (see Figure 5) at the 10 o'clock or the 2 o'clock position (see Figure 6). So you do not damage your penile tissue, always change sides of the penis each time you inject the medication (right side then the left side). Keep a record each time so you do not forget which side you did last time. Do not inject into any vein you can see or feel. This could cause a large bruise on your penis.



Figure 5: Injection site

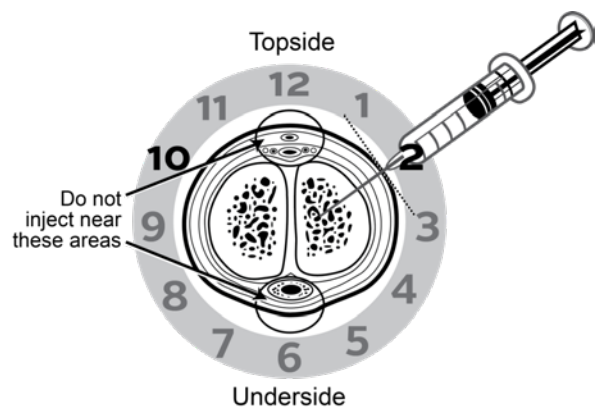


Figure 6: Injection site position

Injecting the Medication

1. Gently loosen the cap from the syringe and put the syringe somewhere you can reach it. Do not take the cap off the syringe. Just loosen it. Remove an alcohol swab from its package and put this nearby.
2. Grasp the head of your penis, not the skin. If you are not circumcised, pull your foreskin back before grasping the head of your penis. Pull your penis straight out while making sure the meatus (hole where you pee from) is straight up and down. Find a grip that feels best for you. You may want to use your non-dominant hand (the hand you do not use as much) to hold your penis. If you need more information about how to hold your penis, talk to your sexual health clinician or urologist.
3. Find the spot where you will inject. Wipe the area with the alcohol swab.
4. While holding onto your penis, use your other hand to pick up the syringe and allow the cap to slide off. Look at the syringe to make sure the dose is correct. Make sure you have not pushed any medication out by accident.
5. Hold the syringe between your thumb, index and middle fingers like a pen or a dart. **Do not put your index finger or thumb on the plunger until the needle is all the way in the skin.**

6. Check your hold again and ensure your penis is in the correct position. Do not twist your penis. This might cause you to inject in the wrong area.
7. Bring the needle close to the skin at a 90° angle and quickly slide it into the shaft of your penis (as shown in Figure 7). The needle must be fully inserted in order to deliver the medication to the correct location. Remember, do not inject into any veins.
8. Push down on the plunger to inject. Be careful not to pull the syringe out while you are injecting.
9. Remove the needle after you have injected all the medication. Pull it straight out. Do not twist or jerk your hand. This may cause bruising. Put pressure on the injection site for 2 to 3 minutes. Put your thumb on the injection site and your index finger on the opposite side of your penis (Figure 8). If you are taking a blood thinner or aspirin, hold the pressure for 5 minutes.

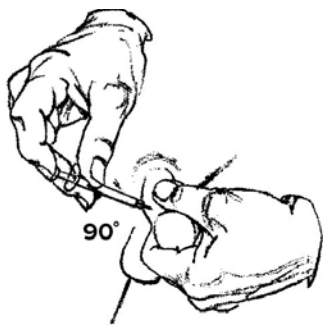


Figure 7: Injecting the medication



Figure 8: Apply pressure

10. Put the syringe in the sharps container.
11. After applying pressure, you can massage your penis to move the medication around. An erection typically happens within 5–20 minutes after injecting. Sexual arousal and stimulation can help you get an erection.

If you do not get an erection:

- Make sure the medication has not expired.
- Check to make sure the medication has been stored properly (has not been left out of the fridge for longer than 15 minutes).
- Confirm you are injecting into the correct area of your penis (see figures 5 & 6)
- It's important to feel relaxed. If you are nervous to inject or have a needle phobia, you may want to use an “auto-injector” (ask your pharmacist or sexual health clinician about how to obtain one).
- You may need a different medication (for example, if you started with Prostin, you may have a better response with Trimix).

Important Points

- Do not take more medication than the dose you are told to take.
- Do not take more than 1 dose of medication in 24 hours.
- Do not give yourself another injection if the medication does not work. Speak with your sexual health clinician or doctor if you are not getting the effects that you want.
- You can inject up to 3 times a week as long as there is 24 hours between each injection.
- If you are currently having chemotherapy for cancer, you must ask your cancer doctor (oncologist) when you can safely inject.
- Do not take any other medication for erectile dysfunction (ED) without speaking to your sexual health clinician or doctor. Examples of other ED medications are:
 - » Sildenafil (Viagra)
 - » Tadalafil (Cialis)
 - » Vardenafil (Levitra)
 - » Avanafil (Stendra)
- Tell your doctor or pharmacist about all the medications you are taking. This is especially important if you are taking medication for high blood pressure, depression, or a medication called an MAO inhibitor such as Phenyelzine (Nardil).

How to Store and Get Rid of Your Used Sharps (needles and syringes)

- Put used sharps in the plastic sharps container your pharmacy gave you.
- **Do not put your used sharps in glass bottles, soda bottles, milk jugs, aluminum cans, coffee cans, or paper or plastic bags.**
- Keep the sharps container away from children and pets.
- Put the used sharps in the container point-first as soon as you use them.
- Do not overfill the container. When it is full (see line on container) lock the lid.
- Keep the container separate from your trash and recycling.
- Return your full sharps container to your local pharmacy.

Priapism (Erection That Lasts Too Long)

Priapism is a firm erection that lasts too long. It can happen without sexual stimulation and does not go away after orgasm. There is a small risk of having priapism with penile injection therapy. When an erection is rigid for too long, no fresh blood flows into the penis. This means the penis is not getting oxygen. This damages the tissue and leads to permanent erectile dysfunction (ED). It is important to prevent this.

If you have an erection at:

1 hour

If your erection is still very firm 1 hour after injecting, and you are finished being sexual, try to soften your erection by:

- » Having an orgasm
- » Urinating (peeing)
- » Putting a cool compress on your penis
- » Taking a shower
- » Going for a walk
- » Stepping up and down on stairs

2 hours

If your erection is still firm 2 hours after injecting and you have tried the things listed above, take a Sudafed (pure Pseudoephedrine Hydrochloride, 120mg). Do not take extended-release or long-acting Sudafed.

If you have high blood pressure or issues with your heart, talk to your pharmacist or doctor before taking Sudafed.

- Make sure to have pseudoephedrine HCl (Sudafed) with you if you are using the penile injections.
- You do not need a prescription to buy pseudoephedrine HCl (Sudafed). It is usually kept behind the counter so you will have to ask the pharmacist.

3 hours

If your erection is still firm 1 hour after taking the Sudafed, **go to the nearest Emergency Department right away! This is a medical emergency!**

Adjusting Your Penile Injection Dose

You are beginning penile injections. These injections can be extremely helpful and are a safe treatment to form erections. However, finding the correct dose for you is very important.

It is best to start with a small dose. If needed, you can increase your dose slowly. This is done based on the **dosing table** on the next page.

It is important to start slowly when finding the right dose. Too high of a dose can cause priapism. Try to be patient. It usually takes two to six injections to find the right dose for you.

To see how the injections are working for you, please use the erection grading scale below.

Erection Scale

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No Erection		Penile Swelling			Erection just firm enough for penetration				100% response

Instructions for Finding Your Injection Dose

To use the dosing table on page 11, we work from left to right. Follow these instructions:

1. To start, look at the column “**My Dose**”. Find the range that your dose falls within.
2. Next, look at the column “**My Penile Response**”. Based upon the 10-point erection scale (see above), pick the response that describes your erection.
3. Next, look at the column “**How Long My Erection Lasted**”. Pick the how long your erection lasted.
4. Finally, move to the far right column ‘**Suggested Change in Dose**’.

If you need to go up to 50 units (0.5 mL) you can try this dose a couple of times. If you are not satisfied with the results, contact your local sexual health clinician.

Here’s an example:

John Doe has not injected into his penis before and was told to start at 5 units.

1. He injects 5 units of medication into his penis.
2. John had an erection that was a 6 on the erection scale.
3. His erection stayed firm for 10 minutes.
4. John should increase his dose by 2 units for the next injection (5+2=7).
5. He will inject 7 units next time.

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
My Dose	My Penile Response	How Long My Erection Lasted	Suggested Change in Dose
1-5 Units	0-2	0	+ 5 Units
1-5 Units	3-5	0	+ 5 Units
1-5 Units	6-7	0–14 minutes	+ 2 Units
1-5 Units	6-7	15–44 minutes	+ 1 Unit
1-5 Units	6-7	45–60 minutes	No change
1-5 Units	6-7	More than 60 minutes	- 1 Unit
1-5 Units	8-10	Less than or equal to 60 minutes	No Change
1-5 Units	8-10	More than 60 minutes	- 2 Units
6-10 Units	0-2	0	+ 6 Units
6-10 Units	3-5	0	+ 5 Units

Finding Your Injection Dose

+ Increase by - Decrease by

My Dose	My Penile Response	How Long My Erection Lasted	Suggested Change in Dose
1-5 Units	0-2	0	+ 5 Units
1-5 Units	3-5	0	+ 5 Units
1-5 Units	6-7	0–14 minutes	+ 2 Units
1-5 Units	6-7	15–44 minutes	+ 1 Unit
1-5 Units	6-7	45–60 minutes	No change
1-5 Units	6-7	More than 60 minutes	- 1 Unit
1-5 Units	8-10	Less than or equal to 60 minutes	No Change
1-5 Units	8-10	More than 60 minutes	- 2 Units
6-10 Units	0-2	0	+ 6 Units
6-10 Units	3-5	0	+ 5 Units
6-10 Units	6-7	0–14 minutes	+ 2 Units
6-10 Units	6-7	15–44 minutes	+ 1 Unit
6-10 Units	6-7	45–60 minutes	No Change
6-10 Units	6-7	More than 60 minutes	- 2 Units
6-10 Units	8-10	Less than or equal to 60 minutes	No Change
6-10 Units	8-10	More than 60 minutes	- 2 Units
11-30 Units	0-2	0	+ 7 Units
11-30 Units	3-5	0	+ 5 Units
11-30 Units	6-7	0–14 minutes	+ 2 Units
11-30 Units	6-7	15–44 minutes	+ 2 Units
11-30 Units	6-7	45–60 minutes	No Change
11-30 Units	6-7	More than 60 minutes	- 2 Units
11-30 Units	8-10	Less than or equal to 60 minutes	No Change
11-30 Units	8-10	More than 60 minutes	- 2 Units
31-50 Units	0-2	0	+ 10 Units
31-50 Units	3-5	0	+ 5 Units
31-50 Units	6-7	0–14 minutes	+ 5 Units
31-50 Units	6-7	15–44 minutes	+ 3 Units

Finding Your Injection Dose			
		+ Increase by	- Decrease by
My Dose	My Penile Response	How Long My Erection Lasted	Suggested Change in Dose
31-50 Units	6-7	45–60 minutes	No Change
31-50 Units	6-7	More than 60 minutes	- 3 Units
31-50 Units	8-10	Less than or equal to 60 minutes	No Change
31-50 Units	8-10	More than 60 minutes	- 5 Units
51-75 Units	0-2	0	+ 25 Units
51-75 Units	3-5	0	+ 10 Units
51-75 Units	6-7	0–14 minutes	+ 10 Units
51-75 Units	6-7	15–44 minutes	+ 7 Units
51-75 Units	6-7	45–60 minutes	No Change
51-75 Units	6-7	More than 60 minutes	- 5 Units
51-75 Units	8-10	Less than or equal to 60 minutes	No Change
51-75 Units	8-10	More than 60 minutes	- 5 Units
76-100 Units	0-2	0	Change Medication
76-100 Units	3-5	0	Change Medication
76-100 Units	6-10	0–44 minutes	Change Medication
76-100 Units	6-10	45–60 minutes	No Change
76-100 Units	6-10	More than 60 minutes	- 5 Units

* Table adapted & modified from Dr. John Mulhall at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center.

Important:

- **Please speak with your health care provider or sexual health clinician if you are unsure about changing your dose.**
- **You must wait 24 hours between injections.**
- **The most you can inject is 3 times per week.**
- **If the first injection does not work, do not give yourself a second injection on the same day.**
- **Do not take any erectile medications by mouth (orally) 18 hours before or after your injection.**

Your First Injection at Home

Inject _____ units of _____ for your first injection at home.

Use the erection scale in this guide and record your response below.

- My erection was a _____ on a scale of 0 to 10
- My erection lasted _____ minutes / hours until it became a 5 on the erection scale (no longer penetration hard)

After each injection, it is best to document the date, dose, and your erectile response and duration. See the table on the last page of this booklet to record your responses.

Erection Scale

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No Erection		Penile Swelling			Erection just firm enough for penetration				100% response



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