

Safe Needle and Lancet Disposal at Home



It is important to safely get rid of used needles and lancets (sharps) to protect yourself and others. Used needles can injure people and spread disease. Never throw a used needle or other sharps into the trash. Below are some simple steps to safely dispose of them.

Making Your Own Sharps Holder

You can make your own sharps disposal container using an empty plastic or laundry detergent bottle, bleach bottle, or other thick plastic container. Common items that meet this are: liquid detergent and bleach bottles, 2 liter pop bottles, and coffee cans if the lid is well taped to the can. Once you have your container:

1. Label the bottle "SHARPS-DANGEROUS" with permanent marker
2. Keep the lid on tightly between uses
3. Keep covered and out of the reach of children
4. Dispose of it in the trash when full, with the lid on tightly and taped shut.

Needle Destroying Device

You can buy a needle destroying device that either melts or cuts off the tip of the needle making it safe to dispose of it in the regular trash.

Mail-back Service

You can buy red biohazard containers and return the needles in the mail for a fee.

To find out more call: BD: 1-877-927-8363 or Sharps Compliance, Inc.: 1-800-772-5657

Away From Home

Keep a small container with you to dispose of lancets and needles when you test or inject away from home.

More Information

- www.SafeNeedleDisposal.org
- Coalition for Safe Needle Disposal – 1-800-643-1643
- Environmental Protection Agency – www.epa.gov (search for "sharps")

Operation Red Box

Operation Red Box is a project on the Near East side of Columbus to safely dispose of used needles and lancets so that people in the community are protected from them, especially neighborhood children. Used needles can be placed in the Red Box any time of day or night, free and anonymously. It is not meant to take a large amount of needles all at once. The box is located at the intersection of 20th St. and Mt. Vernon Ave., Columbus, Ohio.

Sources: Coalition for Safe Needle Disposal, EPA

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