

# Injecting tips



#3 Staying safe  
on the street



**It is not always easy to practice safe injecting on the streets, but the following tips can help.**

**Using sharp works and keeping everything as clean as possible can keep your veins going and protect against dirty hits, abscesses and other infections.**



## Stash and carry

**If possible, be prepared. Get more injecting equipment than you think you might need.**

If there are safe places you can stash unused works (in their wrappers), do so.

*“I really kept myself organised. I’d get two, three or four [works], whatever, and I would never let anyone use my own. And I would carry them around with me in case I would get a free hit.”*



Ross

**Stash and carry baby wipes or alcohol swabs (sterits) with you.**

These are great for wiping your hands, and the skin where you are going to inject – both really important to prevent bacterial infections.



**If the mix ain't clear, it's the crap in the gear**

**You only need a pinch (less than half a sachet of citric or vit C) to dissolve the drugs in a £10 bag of heroin or rock of crack.**

If your mix is still cloudy, this is probably the cutting agents (or crap) that hasn't dissolved. Your hit will be just as good if you filter them out.



**Avoid using lemon juice for drug prep, it has a fungus in it that can damage your eyes.**

## Set up your space

**Try and find a clean, private place where you can prepare and inject.** Somewhere with decent light (not blue light) where you are unlikely to be disturbed.

*“Hospital toilet ... that’s the best place ... Just there’s a lot of them so I mean if you’re in there a couple of hours no one ain’t going to fuck with you. And if anything happens, God forbid, you’re there already.”*



Dev

**Grab a piece of newspaper or rip open a plastic bag - this can provide a good injecting surface,** especially if you are in a public space. You can use this booklet to prepare your hit on.

*“Even if you’re inside a bin shed just make yourself a clean area ... a newspaper, tissues if you’ve got it, just keep it clean, just get everything away from the frigin’ area mate.”*



Henry

## No sharps bin?

**Use an empty plastic bottle instead.**

Put the lid on, and put it in a rubbish bin.



## Don't mess with filters

**Chuck old filters!** They can grow bacteria and make you sick. **Tearing filters in half is also bad news** – fibres can get in the mix and make you sick. It's better to hold a bit of water back and rinse the filter than break it up.



## **Sterile = sharp**

**New works are best for preventing infections, and also for looking after your veins.**

**This needle has been through the skin a few times in the search for a vein.**



If you have to use old works, it is better to re-use yours than use someone else's. Clean them out with cold water after each injection, hot water will make the blood clot.

*“Like it’s a new pin, so it’s pin point sharp. I used an old one, and it was like, I’ve had sharper spoons and stuff, you know. It hurts trying to do it with a blunt pin.”*



Jade

**If you re-use your own equipment a lot, using steriliser tablets dissolved in water can help protect against bacterial infections.**

*“I had a little flask and I used to put my spoon [cooker] in there ... I’d change the water at services when I have coffee, I used to get hot water off them and keep it in my flask with half a sterilising tablet. I’d buy sterilising tablets [from the chemist], just the shop’s own brand cheap ones.”*



Katy



## You don't want ink in your drink

**If you have to re-use cookers, swab them first.**

If you are using a can or makeshift cooker

- do your best to get any dye off.

*“Cans - take out the little number off the bottom with a swab ... You don't want the ink in your drink!”*



Dev

## Saliva = bad news!



**Your spit has heaps of bacteria in it**

- if any gets in your injection you can get really sick. **Don't lick your needle**

**or your injection site!**

## Ask for a bottle of water

**Cold tap water is fine for preparing an injection with, but it's not always easy to access.** If using bottled water, try to get hold of a new bottle – bacteria can grow in ones that have been drunk from.

Puddle water and toilet water aren't great – better to ask a passerby for their left over bottle of water – ideally, they'll offer to buy you a new one.

*“I used to always get people to buy me bottles of water and then I'd pull up from the bottle. People would come and buy me drinks and food all the time. They always asked me, what do you want from the shop?”*



Sally

## Take a break

Getting a vein can be a nightmare, when you've been injecting for a while.

Try snorting or smoking to give your veins a break, or consider shafting (up ya bum).

*"The last few times I've used I've actually put it up my arse ... it gets into your system quickly and it's just, it's just a lot less hassle. Skin popping, you're always running the risk of an abscess, even if you get the vein you can still get an abscess, you know."*



Peter

Also in this series:

***Injecting tips #1***

*Preventing and caring for bacterial infections*

***Injecting tips #2***

*Prevention and care: abscesses and ulcers*

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