



GOING IN THE

GROIN INJECTING THE
FEMORAL VEIN



Injecting in the vein in your groin is much more risky than using the veins in your arms. It can lead to very serious and long-lasting health problems.



Why inject in the groin?

Going in the groin should be a last resort. There is always a better, safer option.



Paul

Paul goes in the groin because he cannot find anywhere else to inject.

If your groin is the only place left then it's time to get a methadone prescription (if you're heroin dependent), use in a different way, or quit.



Kerry

Kerry goes in the groin to hide her habit from her friends and family.

Developing better injecting technique can prevent injection marks and scars on your arms. If you develop problems with your legs, everyone will notice!



Lee

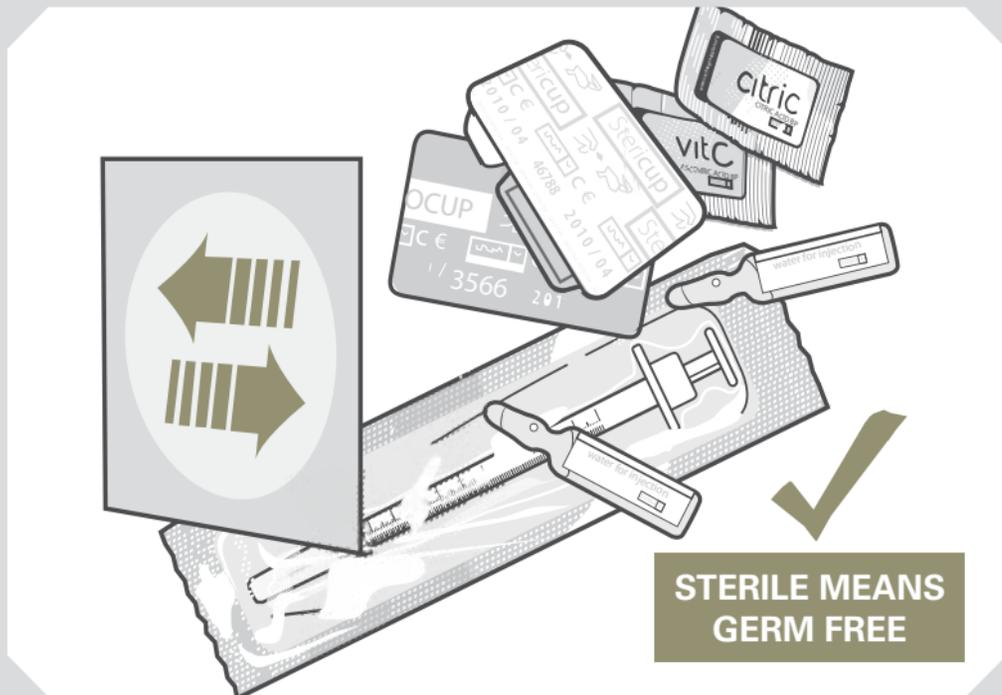
All of Lee's friends go in the groin so that is how he learnt to inject.

If everyone does it, it may seem normal, but the groin is a very dangerous place to inject.

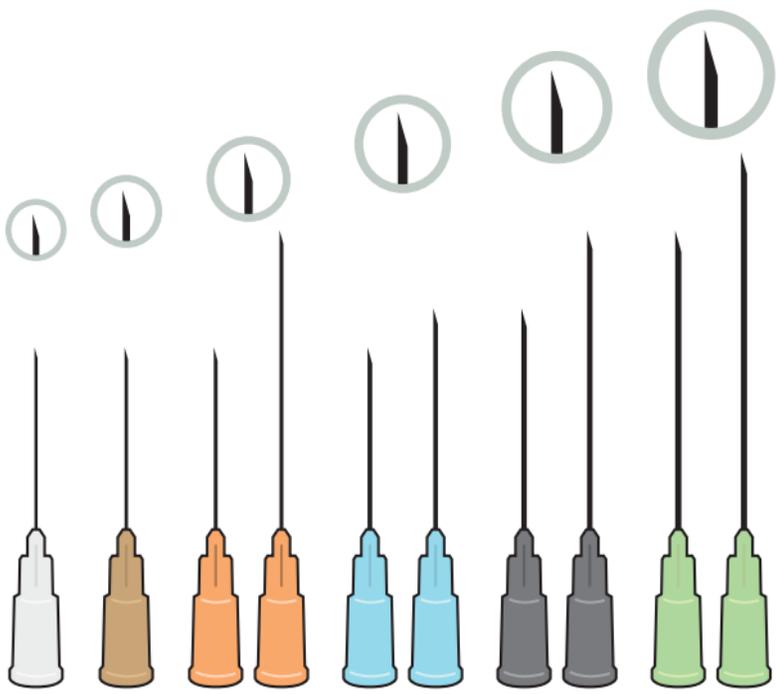


Safer injecting

There is no safe way to inject in the groin,
but you can reduce the risk by improving
the way you inject.



Your local exchange can help with kit and information. Avoid infections by using new sterile kit for every hit.



LESS DAMAGE MORE DAMAGE



USE A NEW PIN FOR EVERY HIT

You will have fewer injuries, fewer infections and less chance of getting HIV or Hep C.

Thicker or longer needles do more harm.
Use the shortest and thinnest needle you can.
Grey, brown and orange needles are safer,
but you must be careful not to snap them.

After time, people may need a longer
needle to reach their vein or a thicker one
to push through scar tissue.



Viruses can be spread in syringes that have been used by others.



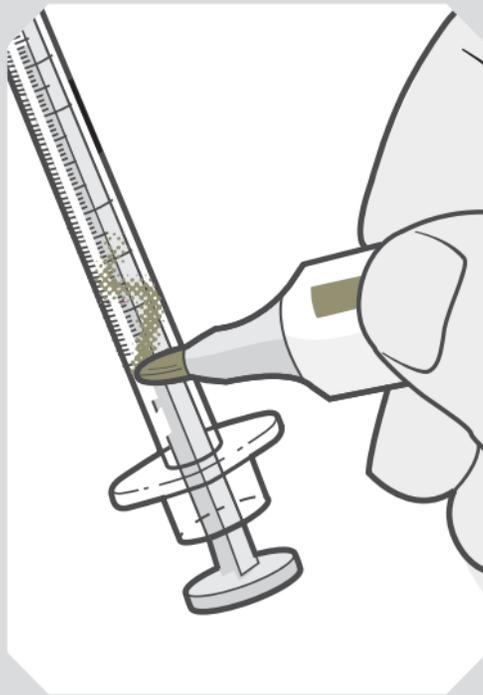
Cleaning works!

Avoid Hep C and HIV.

*Try not to re-use syringes,
but if you do, rinse them
with water and bleach.*



Find a clean space just for you and no one else.



If you can, use syringes that have different colour plungers. If not, mark your used syringes if there's any chance you might have to re-use them.



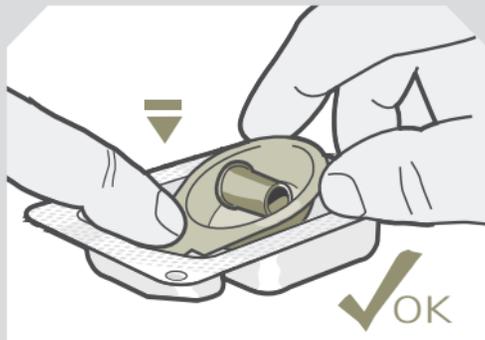
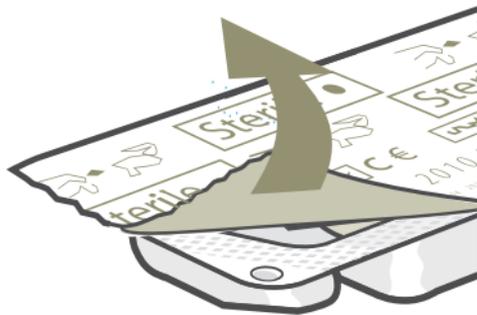


To prevent bacterial infections wash your hands and the injection site with soap and water. Then wipe once with a swab.

Protect yourself

- ☠ Don't share syringes
- ✓ Use the smallest needle you can
- ✓ Wash your hands and your groin before you inject





Use a new sterile cooker. Keep it sterile – do not touch the inside.

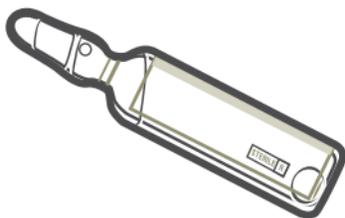


Add the heroin.



Unwrap a brand new sterile syringe.





OR



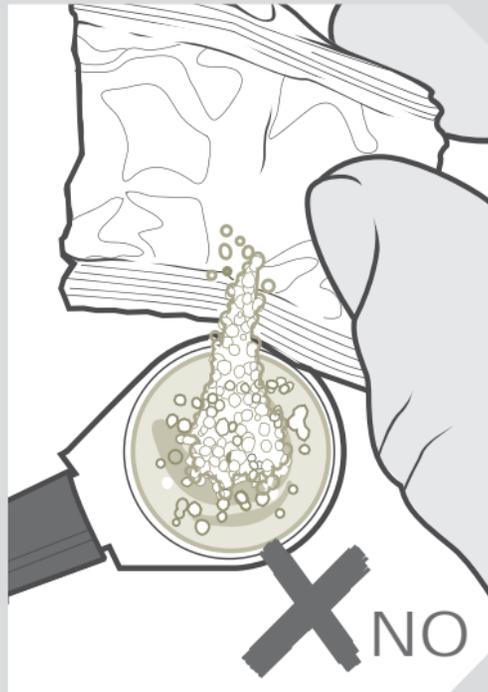
Draw up sterile water
or boiled water that has
cooled.



Squirt the water into the cooker. Take care not to blunt the needle.



Use only citric or vit C powder to dissolve the solution.



Acid burns veins so use as little as you can.



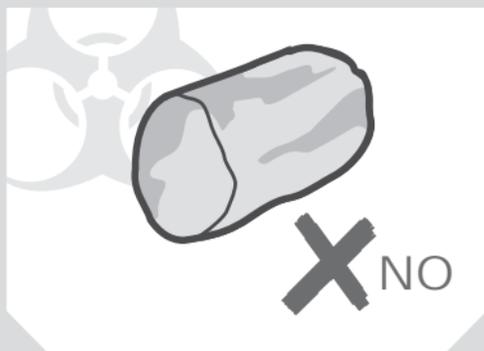
Heat until the heroin dissolves.



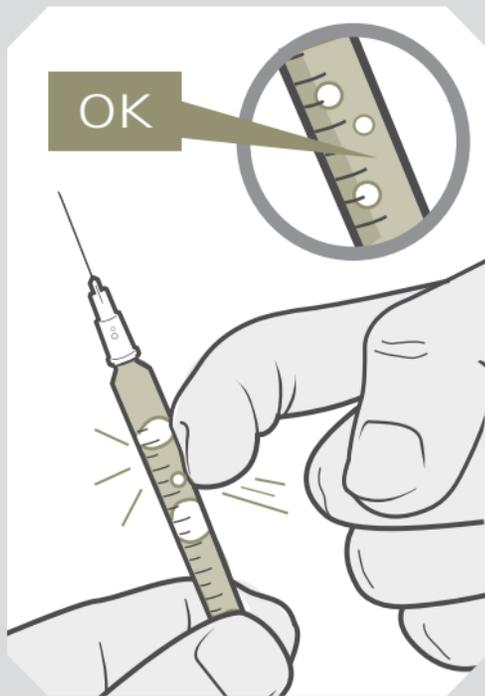
Stir using the cap of a sterile syringe.



Leave any stubborn bits.
These are impurities,
not heroin.



Avoid infections and
dirty hits – use a new
sterile filter.



Tap and squirt out big bubbles. Small bubbles are no problem.



NEVER TOUCH OR LICK

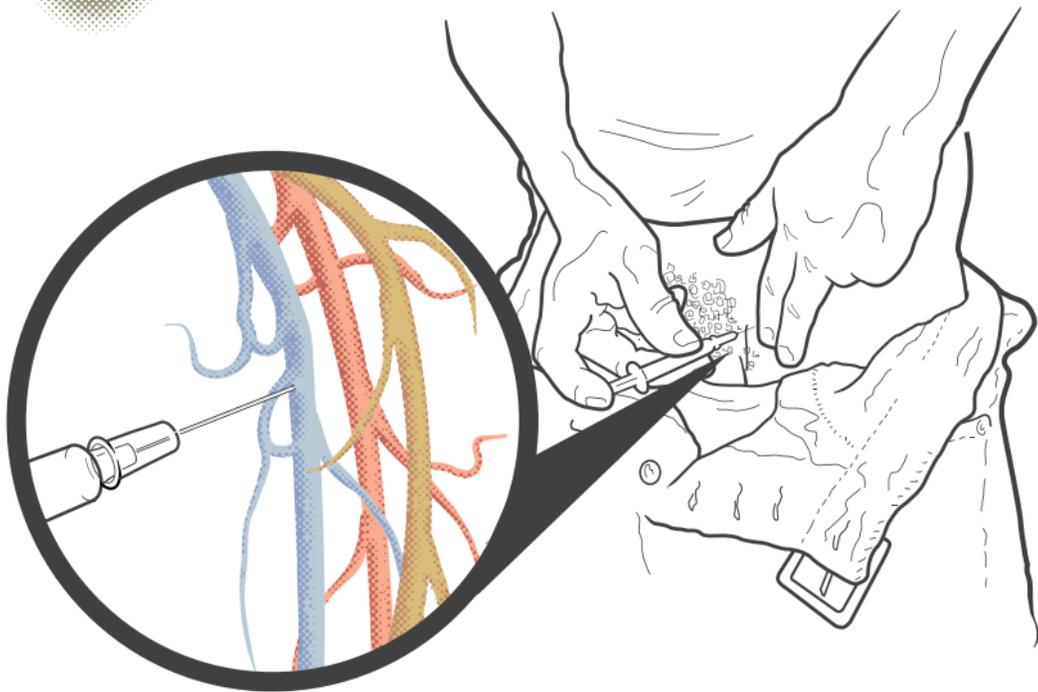
Your skin and mouth are covered with bacteria.

- ✓ Use new kit for every hit
- ✓ Use as little citric as you can
- ☠ Never touch or lick the pin





Under the skin





Vein

This is one of the most important veins in your body. It carries all the blood from your leg back to your heart.



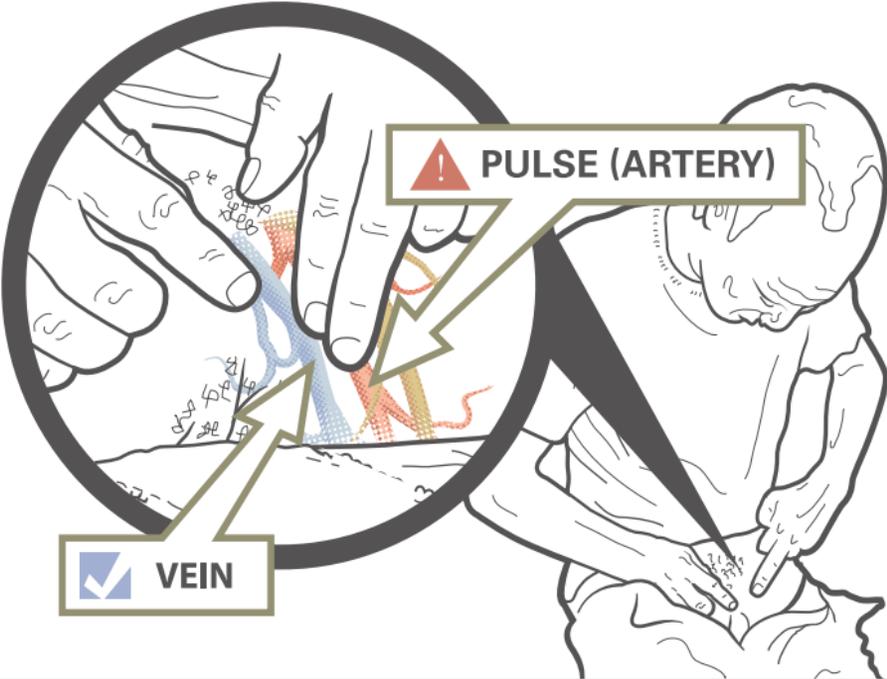
Artery

The big artery supplies blood to your leg. If you injure it you could lose your leg or even bleed to death!



Nerve

You need this nerve to move your leg and feel touch and pain. If you hit it you could be paralysed.



PULSE (ARTERY)



VEIN

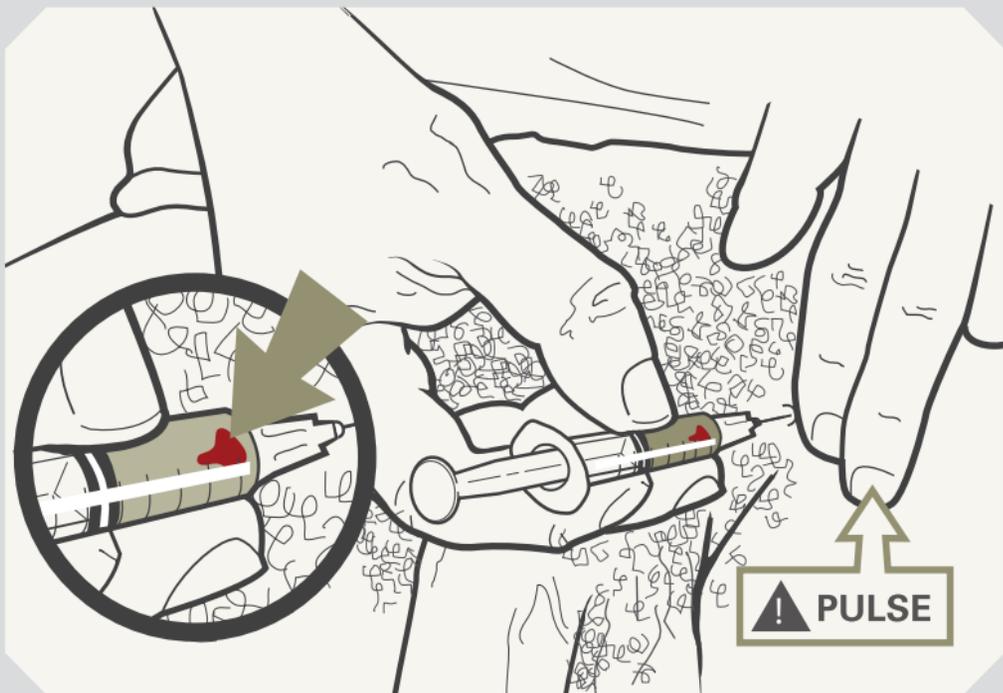
First find the pulse near the crease of your groin.
This is your artery. *Never inject here.*

Place your middle finger over the pulse so you
don't hit your artery.

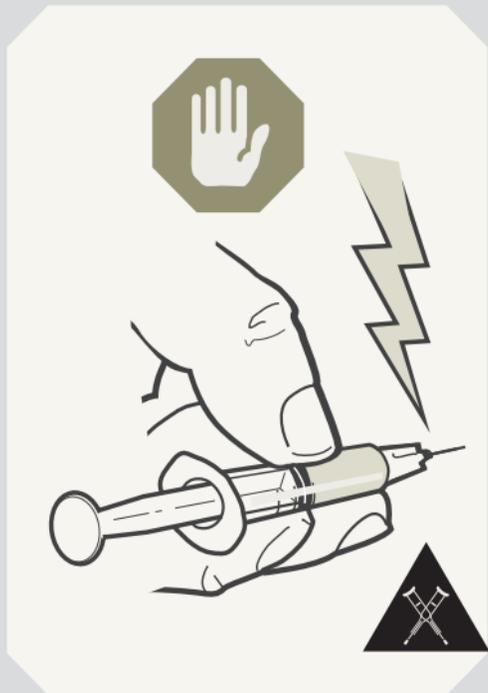
Your femoral vein is inwards from the pulse,
towards your genitals.



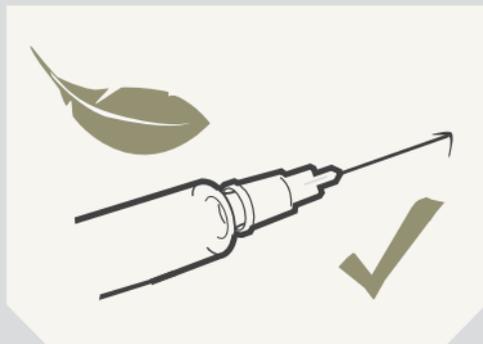
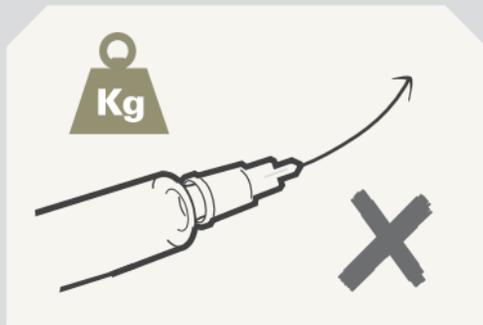
*We cannot show you exactly where the vein is
because everybody is different. Over time you
may develop a mark or needle hole at the site.*



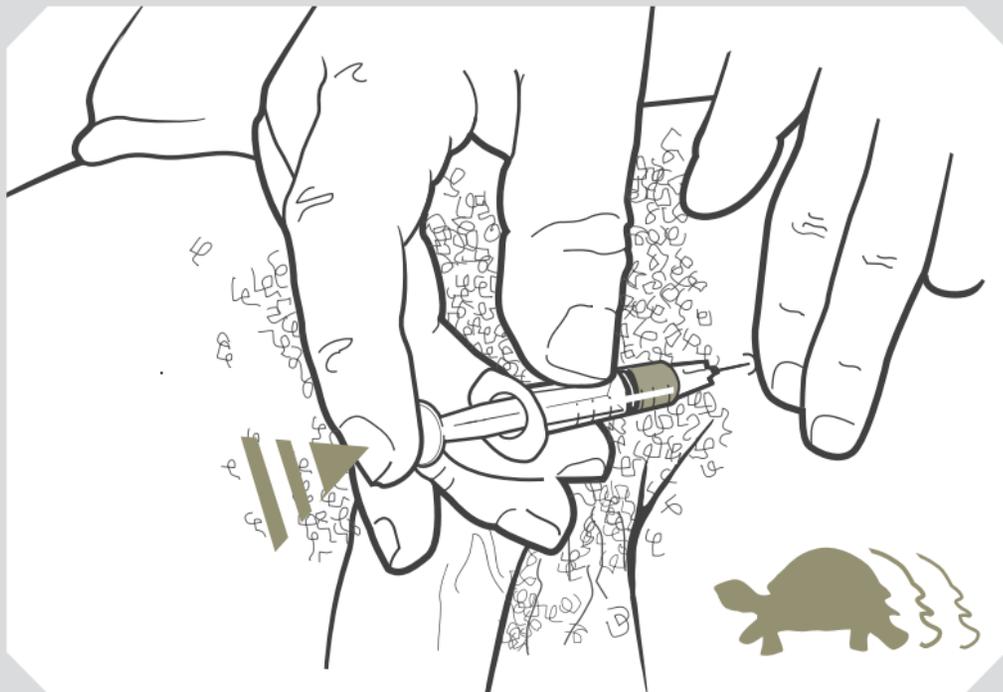
Ease the needle in at 90 degrees. If you hit the vein a little dark red blood will show in the syringe.



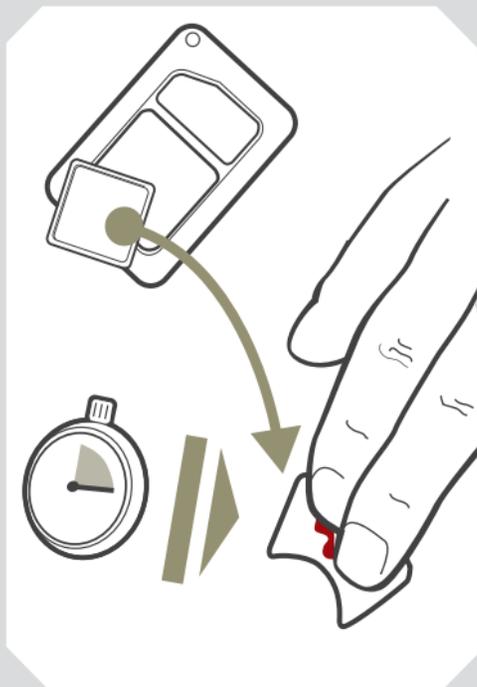
Go slowly, **STOP** if you feel pain. It may be your artery or nerve. Try elsewhere.



BE GENTLE, take care not to bend the pin. It may snap.



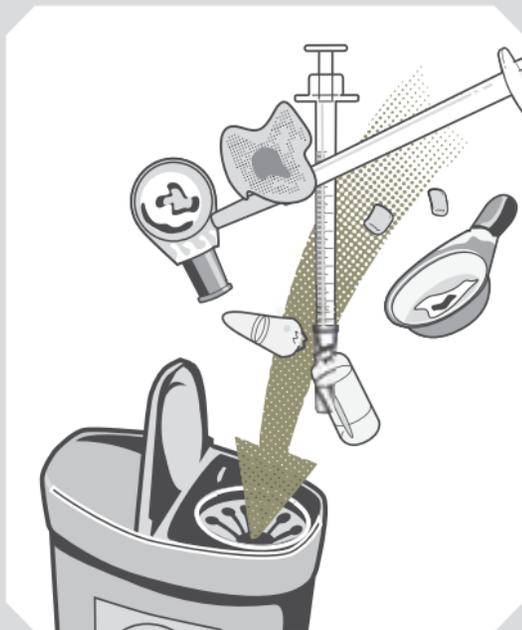
Draw back a little to make sure you are in the vein.
Then press the plunger very slowly.



Ease out the pin. Apply pressure with a clean pad to stop any bleeding.



DO NOT FLUSH or boot with blood: it can damage the vein.



Dispose of everything you use to inject in a sharps box.



KEEP OTHERS SAFE.

Always keep drugs and kit out of reach of children.

- ✓ Keep drugs and kit out of reach of children
- ✓ Go slowly and stop if you feel pain
- ✗ Do not flush the barrel with blood after injecting





Risks and dangers



Circulation problems

Going in the groin affects the blood supply to your whole leg. Most of the damage is hidden, but as your femoral vein narrows, varicose veins (big wobbly veins), and swollen legs are visible signs that your injecting is causing circulation problems.



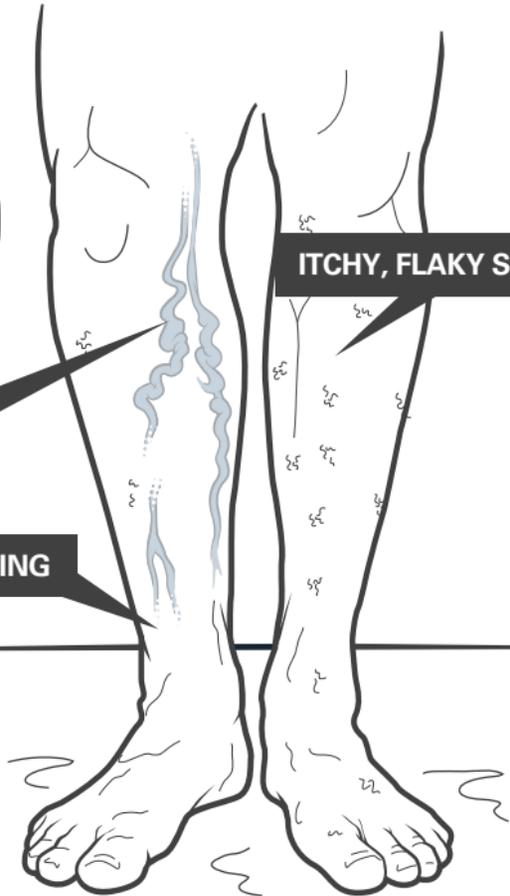
***Gentle exercise** and resting with your legs up helps, but the only way to prevent circulation problems is to stop injecting in the groin.*



VARICOSE VEINS

SWELLING

ITCHY, FLAKY SKIN





Blood clots (DVT)

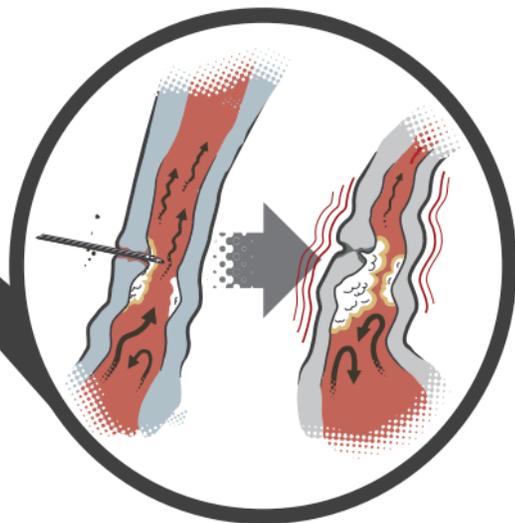
Injecting in the groin can cause clots in your vein that stop the blood from flowing properly in your leg (*deep vein thrombosis* or *DVT*). A painful, swollen leg is a sign that you may have a DVT. If a clot reaches your heart or lungs it can kill.



*A DVT will need **hospital treatment** and ongoing care. Seek help urgently if you have chest pains or feel breathless.*

**FEELING SHORT OF BREATH
CHEST PAINS**

PAIN & SWELLING





Artery hit

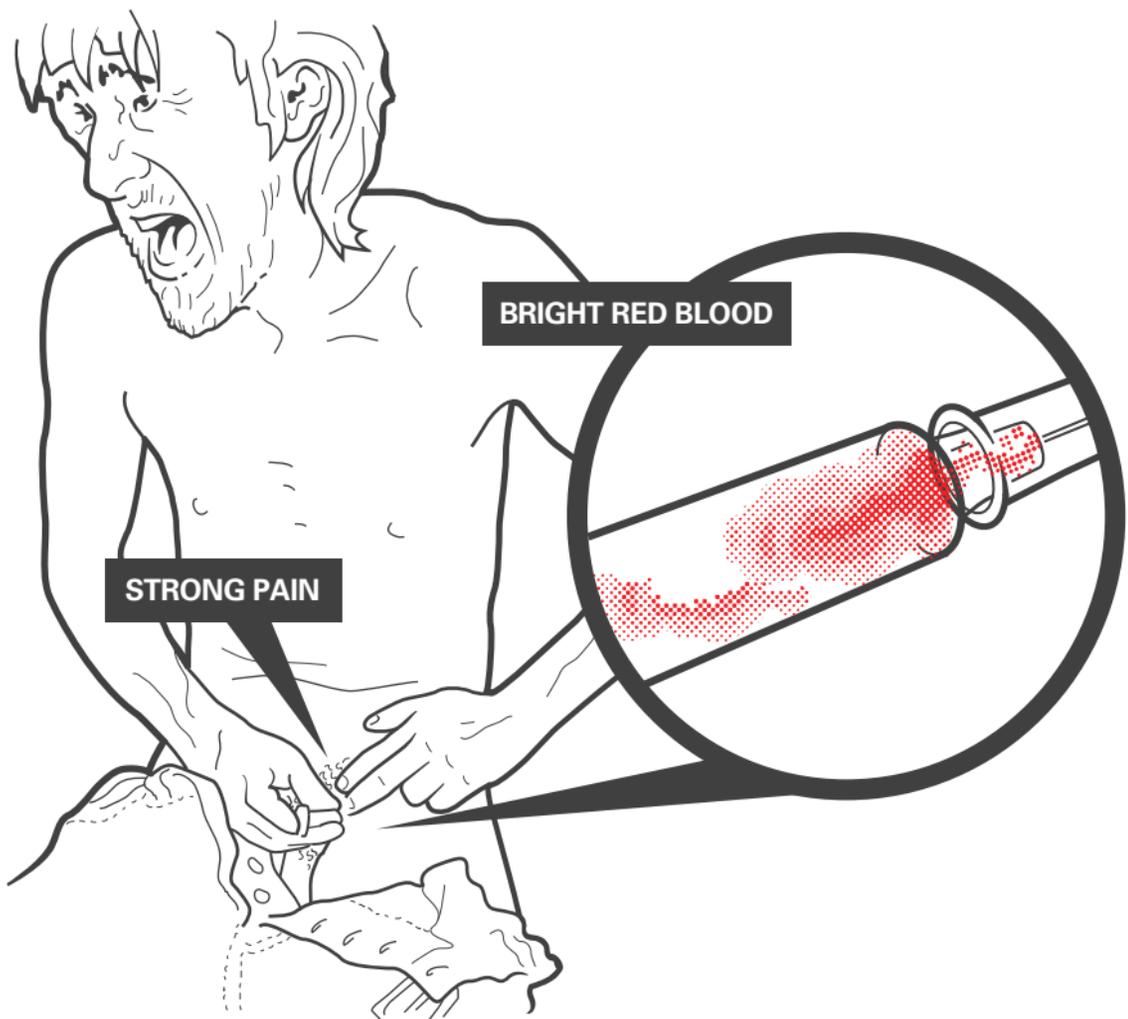
The artery in the groin is close to the vein so it is easy to hit it by accident. Watch out for strong pain, bleeding or bright red blood in the barrel. If you injure your artery you could lose your leg or bleed to death.



*If you hit your artery **do not inject.***

Apply pressure and raise your leg.

If the bleeding does not stop call 999.



BRIGHT RED BLOOD

STRONG PAIN



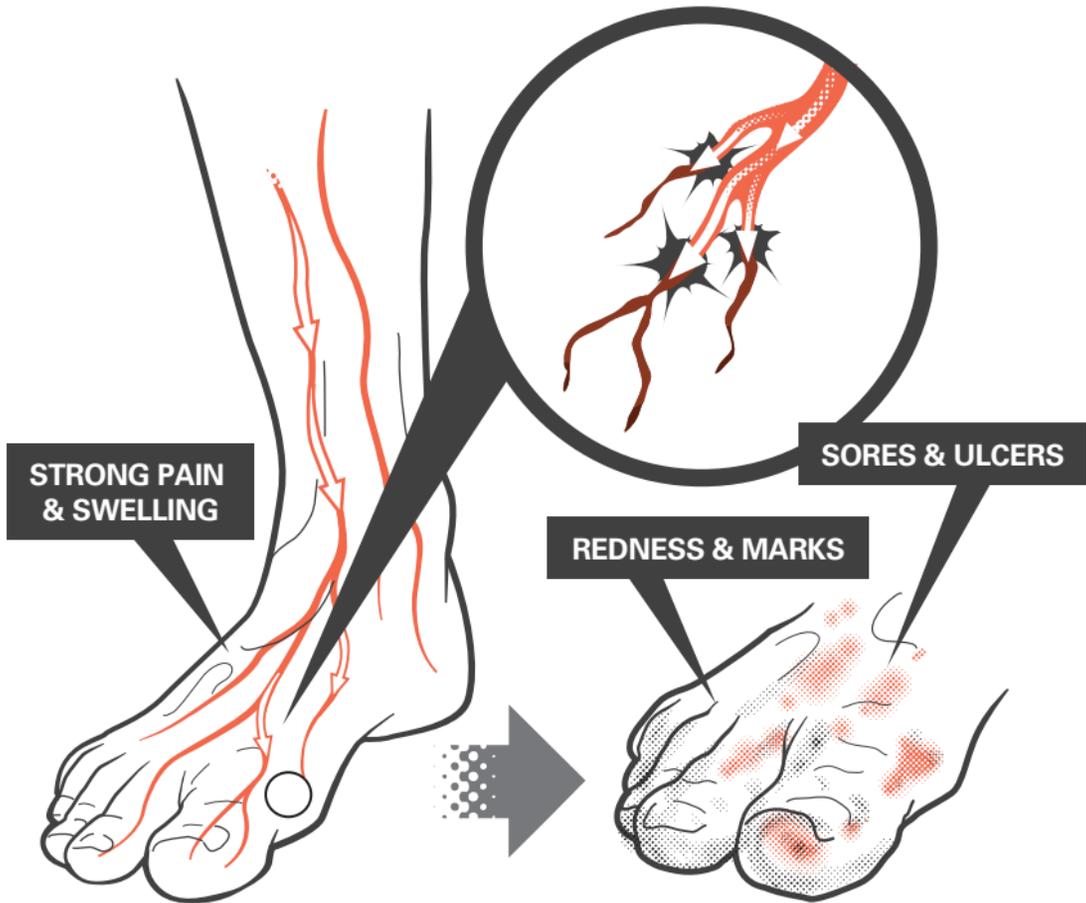
Artery blockages

If you inject into your artery the drugs will flow down into your leg and foot where they can block up small blood vessels. Blockages are dangerous, without treatment you could lose part of your limb!



Don't wait to see what happens.

*If you have severe pain or cannot walk
dial 999 right away.*



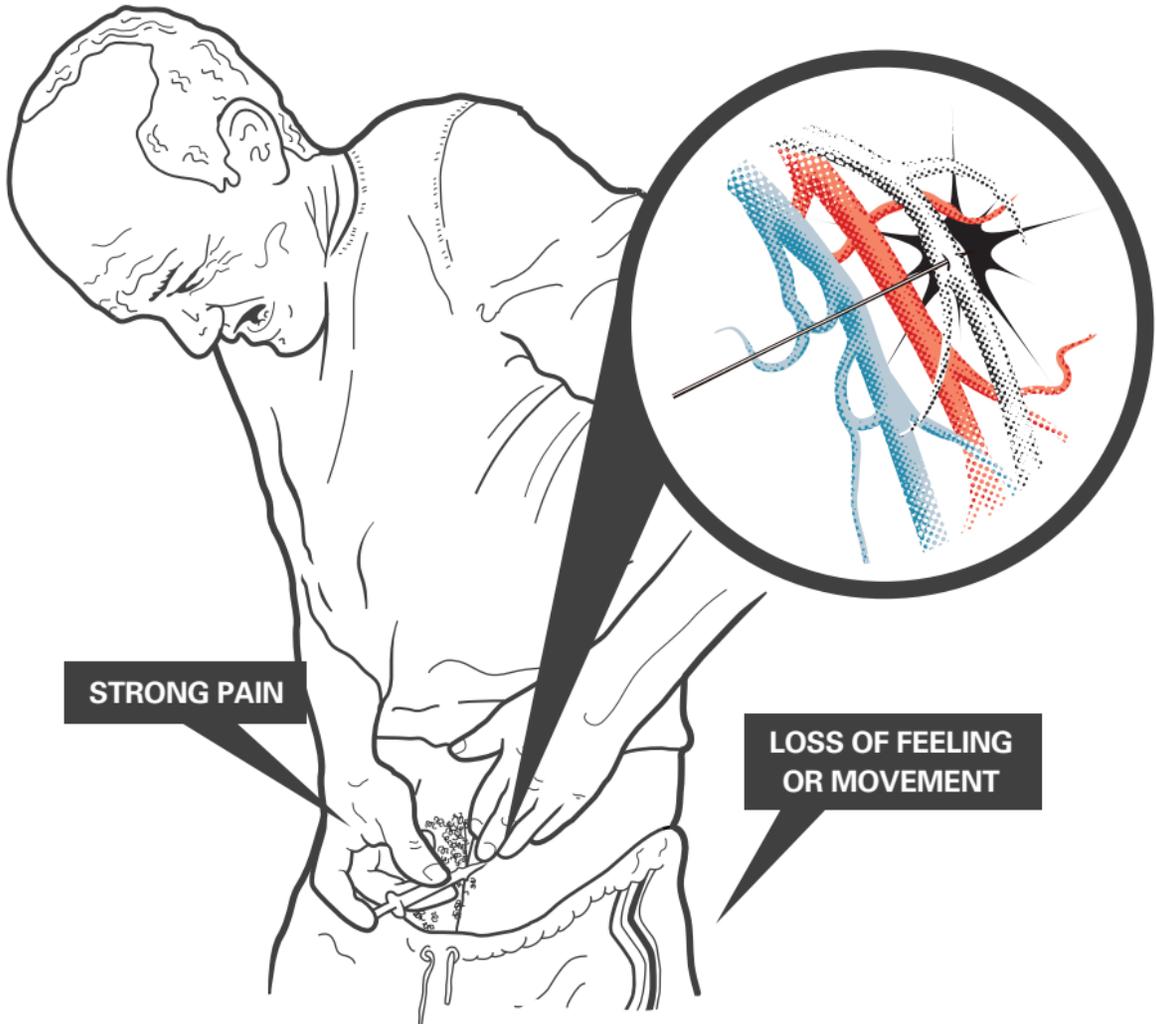


Nerve hits

The nerve in your groin is close to the vein. Hitting the big nerve in your groin is very painful and the damage can last for life. You may not be able to feel or move your leg properly again.



*If you hit the nerve **take the pin out slowly** and carefully. Yanking it can cause more damage. See a doctor if problems continue.*



STRONG PAIN

**LOSS OF FEELING
OR MOVEMENT**

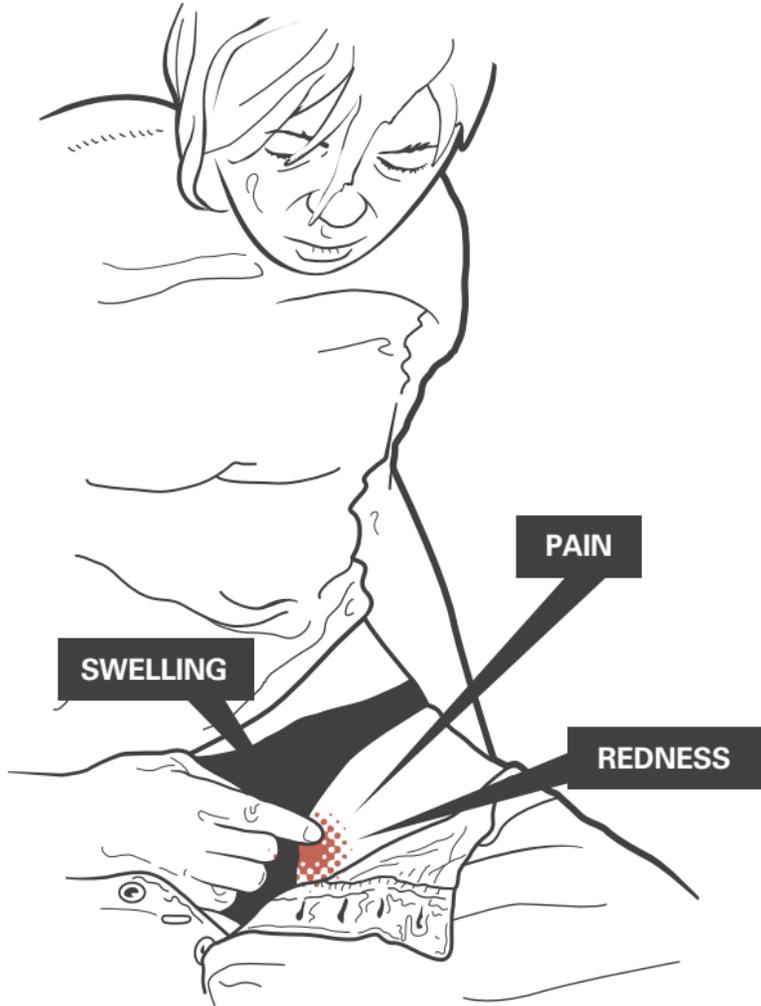


Infections

Infections start when bacteria get under the skin and attack the body. Bacterial infections grow quickly in the groin because it is a warm and sweaty place. If they are not treated, infections can be very dangerous.



*Doctors can treat most infections if you **get help quickly**. Stop injecting there and keep the area clean.*



PAIN

SWELLING

REDNESS

[>] aims
To provide information for current injectors in a predominantly graphic format that is accessible to those with lower levels of literacy.

[>] audience
People who inject into the femoral vein.
Use with under 16s with specialist support.

[v] content
No swearing. Illustrations of high-risk drug use.

[£] funding
Self-financed.



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Product code: D8 | Fourth edition | July 2018

Published by: Exchange Supplies, 1 Great Western Industrial Centre, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1RD

Original text, illustrations, and design by Richard Kemplay.

Text for this edition updated by Exchange Supplies.

EXCHANGE
SUPPLIES