How to Give a Methotrexate Injection

Why do I need to inject methotrexate?
When you inject methotrexate, your body absorbs the medicine better. This makes it easier for the doctor to adjust the amount of medicine you need. You or a family member can give the injection.

How is the medication supplied?
• Methotrexate for injection is a clear yellow liquid that comes in a 2 milliliter (mL) bottle.
• These bottles can be used for more than one dose because they have a preservative in them.

How is methotrexate stored?
• It should be stored at room temperature, out of the reach of children and away from light (store in a cupboard).
• Once opened, bottles of methotrexate can be safely stored for 4 weeks (28 days).
• Throw away all empty or expired bottles in a sharps container (container for used needles).

How to use the needle and syringe
• The syringe and needle come together.
• The barrel of the syringe has a dose-measuring scale on it.
• The syringe and needle can be used only once.

What supplies will I need?
• 2 alcohol swabs with each injection
• Sharps container
• Needle and syringe
• Adhesive bandage

How to get ready to inject methotrexate
• Choose a work area that is well lit.
• Clean the table or work area you are going to use.
• Gather your supplies.
• Wash your hands with soap and water.
• Choose a site to inject. This site should be a place where you can pinch 1 inch of fat, usually the abdomen. Stay at least 3 finger widths away from the belly button. Do not inject near scars, bruises, and red or swollen areas.
• It is best to choose a different site each time and to change between the using the left and right sides.
• If someone else is giving the injection, they can use the upper arm.
• Use an alcohol swab to clean the area you are going to inject.

How to prepare the medication
• If this is a new bottle, pop the cap off the top. Throw the cap away.
• Clean the top of the bottle with the alcohol pad and let dry.
• Remove the cap from needle.
• Pull the plunger down to let air in (equal to about half the amount of medication you will take).
• Push the needle through the top of the methotrexate bottle.
• Push the air in the syringe into the bottle. Leave the needle in the bottle.
• Turn the bottle and syringe upside down so the needle tip is covered by the methotrexate.
• Pull the syringe plunger back slowly to get medication into the syringe.
• Look for air bubbles in your syringe (air bubbles mean you will get less medication).
• If you see air bubbles, push the methotrexate back in and pull back out. Do this until you have no bubbles (a few small air bubbles are OK).
• Measure the exact amount of methotrexate ordered.
• Pull the needle out of the bottle.

How to inject methotrexate
• Hold the syringe like a pencil and do not let the needle touch anything.
• With your other hand, pinch up your skin at the site you cleaned.
• Push the needle straight into the skin at a 90-degree angle.
• Release the skin.
• Push the methotrexate in with the plunger.
• Pull the needle straight out.
• Apply the safety cover of the needle.
• Don’t worry if there is a small amount of blood or a bead of yellow methotrexate at the site after the needle is removed.
• Place a bandage on the site if needed.
• Do not rub the site.
• Throw away used needles in a sharps container.