

Safe Injection Practices

Safe injection practices are a vital component of healthcare organizations’ infection prevention and control (IPC) protocols. Yet, despite established standards and guidance, lapses in injection safety continue to persist. These lapses can put patients and healthcare providers at risk of disease transmission (e.g., viral infections, fungal infections, and bacterial infections) and other harms (e.g., needlestick injuries).¹ Unsafe injection practices also can lead financial losses as a result of increased liability exposure and costs associated with potential loss of reputation.

To address these issues, healthcare organizations should include safe injection practices as part of their IPC policies, training, and core competencies for healthcare providers and staff members. This checklist offers key strategies² for injection safety and can help organizational leaders evaluate their current protocols and identify improvement opportunities.

	Yes	No
<i>Organizational Policies and Procedures</i>		
Does your organization incorporate guidance on safe injection practices from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other professional organizations into its IPC policies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your organization’s IPC policies include guidance related to hand hygiene, gloving, and the use of personal protective equipment (e.g., the use of face masks during the administration of epidural injections)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your organization have and enforce protocols for the use of aseptic technique – i.e., handling, preparing, and storing medications and injection equipment/supplies to prevent microbial contamination.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Yes	No
<i>Organizational Policies and Procedures (continued)</i>		
Does your organization’s IPC policies require that medication preparation occurs only in a clean, dedicated medication prep area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has your organization implemented policies and procedures for cleaning and disinfection of environmental surfaces?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has your organization implemented policies and procedures to prevent drug diversion?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your organization stock adequate injection supplies and equipment to prevent reuse of items?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has your organization implemented or considered technologies related to injection safety (e.g., auto-disable syringes or reuse prevention syringes)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Safe Injection Practices</i>		
Are injections prepared as close as possible to the time of administration to the patient?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are needles/syringes removed from sterile packaging at the time of use and not in advance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are intravenous (IV) bags opened or spiked as close to the time of use as possible?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are single-dose medication vials used whenever possible?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are multidose medication vials dedicated to a single patient whenever possible?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If multidose vials must be used for more than one patient, are they maintained in a centralized medication area and kept out of patient treatment areas?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are medication vials entered with a new needle and a new syringe, even when obtaining additional doses for the same patient?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Yes	No
Safe Injection Practices (continued)		
Do providers put a date on multidose vials when they are first opened and discard them within 28 days unless the manufacturer specifies a different date for disposal?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do providers swab the access diaphragms of medication vials with alcohol or an appropriate disinfectant before inserting a device into the vial?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Are the following injection practices prohibited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administering medications from the same syringe to multiple patients (even if the needle or cannula on the syringe is changed)? • Administering medications from a single-dose vial or IV solution bag to more than one patient? • Combining the leftover contents of single-dose vials for later use? • Reusing syringes to enter medication vials/solutions? • Reusing IV administration supplies (e.g., bags, tubes, and connectors) on more than one patient? • Reusing vacutainer holders? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are used sharps disposed of at the point of care in sharps containers that are closable, puncture-resistant, and leak-proof?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do healthcare providers follow the CDC’s infection control guidelines for assisted blood glucose monitoring and insulin administration ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do healthcare providers follow best practices for infection prevention during point-of-care testing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are patient care areas appropriately spaced, and do patients have dedicated IV poles and chair-side tables?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do providers take precautions to ensure that potentially contaminated items do not come in contact with other patient care items?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Yes	No
<i>Safe Injection Practices (continued)</i>		
Are immediate-use compounded sterile preparations (CSPs) administered no later than 1 hour following the start of the CSP preparation per United States Pharmacopeia-National Formulary standards for sterile compounding (USP <797>)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Training and Oversight</i>		
Do providers who prepare and/or administer parenteral medications receive training on safe injection practices during orientation, annually, and when new equipment, technology, or procedures are introduced?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are providers required to demonstrate competency with injection practices following training?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do providers receive training on how to properly dispose of used syringes, needles, and IV administration supplies (e.g., bags, tubes, and connectors)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your organization routinely monitor providers to ensure adherence to safe injection protocols?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are safety issues that are identified during monitoring documented, and do providers receive feedback?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Resources

For more information and resources about IPC guidelines and best practices in your healthcare organization, see the following MedPro resources:

- [Article: Seven Strategies to Prevent Drug Diversion in Healthcare Organizations](#)
- [Guideline: Infection Prevention & Control in Ambulatory Care Settings](#)
- [Risk Resources: Infection Prevention & Control in Ambulatory Care Settings](#)
- [Risk Resources: Infection Prevention & Control in Dentistry](#)

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019, June 21). FAQs regarding safe practices for medical injections: General questions. Retrieved from www.cdc.gov/injectionsafety/providers/provider_faqs_general.html

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016, September). *Guide to infection prevention for outpatient settings: Minimum expectations for safe care* (Version 2.3). Retrieved from www.cdc.gov/hai/settings/outpatient/outpatient-care-guidelines.html; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016, March 25). Infection prevention and control in dental settings: Frequently asked questions on safe injection practices. Retrieved from www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/faqs/safe-injection-practices.html; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention One & Only Campaign. (n.d.). *Injection safety checklist*. Retrieved from www.cdc.gov/injectionsafety/PDF/Safe-Injection-Checklist-P.pdf; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019, June 20). Injection safety information for providers: FAQs regarding safe practices for medical injections – background. Retrieved from www.cdc.gov/injectionsafety/providers/provider_faqs.html; American Society of Health-System Pharmacists. (2014). ASHP guidelines on compounding sterile preparations. *American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy*, 71, 145-66.

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