



## What to do if you encounter a needle, crack pipe, or any other drug paraphernalia

If you choose to pick up a needle, crack pipe, or other drug paraphernalia, handle them with care and ensure to:

- Treat all needles, crack pipes, and other drug paraphernalia (cookers, blades, etc.) as contaminated.
- Wear gloves (ie. Latex, rubber, leather gardening glove). Note: Gloves are meant to protect against fluid contamination, not punctures or cuts.
- Use tongs, pliers, or tweezers to pick up the needle, crack pipe, or other drug paraphernalia. Be sure to clean and disinfect the pickup instrument afterwards.
- Pick up the needle by the plastic end (barrel).
- Point the needle tip away from your body. Be very careful not to poke yourself with the needle.
- Put the sharps disposal container on a stable surface next to the needle. Do not hold the container in your hand or between your knees or feet while placing the needle inside.
- Place the needle point down into the container. Do not force the needle into the container.



- If you do not have a specialized sharps container, put the needle into a non-breakable, puncture-proof container with a lid. (ie, thick plastic bottle).



- Close the container securely.
- Find the nearest designated needle disposal location by visiting [OttawaPublicHealth.ca/Needles](http://OttawaPublicHealth.ca/Needles). Do not flush needles down the toilet or put them in the garbage or recycling bin.
- Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer after removal of gloves.



**If a needle injury occurs wash the area well, let the wound bleed, do not apply pressure to the wound and seek immediate medical attention. For more information, visit [OttawaPublicHealth.ca/Needles](http://OttawaPublicHealth.ca/Needles).**

Always follow your organization's sharps disposal policies and procedures. If your organization has a contract with a licensed biomedical waste disposal company, properly secure the sharps and contact your contractor for final pickup and disposal.