

What to do if you encounter a needle, glass pipe, or any other drug use equipment

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

- Treat all needles, glass pipes, and other drug use equipment (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, glass pipe, or other drug use equipment. Be sure to clean and disinfect the pickup instrument.
- 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. 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.

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.