

Heroin Helper

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Bleaching Syringes

Providing information on the Heroin Helper site is a practical matter. We can't pretend that heroin users can or will do what is in their best interests. So it is with this article on syringe cleaning. In a perfect world, people should never reuse their syringes; they become dirty and the needles become dull. But sometimes, reusing syringes is necessary, and so we provide users with the information on how to clean them.

In addition to cleaning used syringes, it is important to sharpen the needle. You should read the Heroin Helper article, [Sharpening Syringe Tips](#). Dull syringe tips can cause many problems. Cleaning syringes is still the most important thing a user can do, however--even when he doesn't share them.

There is a lot of information floating around on how to bleach syringes. A lot of it is contradictory. Don't let this bother you. There is really only one part of the cleaning process that is absolutely essential:

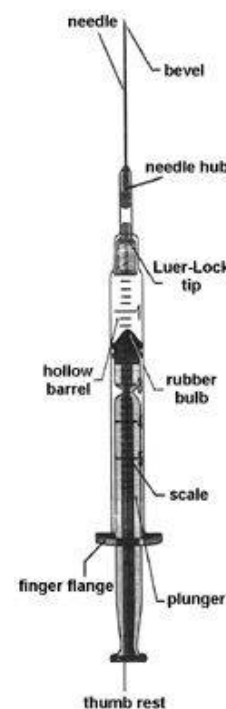
- Rinse the syringe thoroughly after bleaching.

Other than that, you can pretty much make up your own recipe for cleaning syringes. What follows is a good procedure--well worth using if you don't have a way you already use.

1. Find a work area and clean it. Bathrooms are okay, but kitchens are better. Regardless, make sure that the area in which you are going to work is as clean as you can get it.
2. Wash your hands.
3. Rinse the syringe with cold water several times. This can be done in any number of ways. (a) Draw clean water into the syringe from a small receptacle of water, and flush the contents into the sink. (b) Remove the plunger from the syringe and pour the water into the syringe barrel; replace the plunger and flush the contents into the sink. (c) Start the faucet flowing at a steady rate; draw water into the syringe directly from the water flow flush the contents into the sink. Note that this last procedure can be difficult to do well.
4. Pour regular household bleach into a small clean receptacle. If bleach is unavailable, you can use isopropyl alcohol or hydrogen peroxide.
5. From the small receptacle, draw up bleach into the syringe until the barrel is about half full.
6. Pull the syringe plunger out as far as it will go without detaching it.
7. Shake the syringe for about a minute.
8. Empty the syringe contents into the sink.
9. Empty and clean the bleach receptacle. Do not reuse the bleach!
10. Rinse the syringe several times with cold water.

There is controversy about how long the syringe should be kept in bleach. It appears that 30 seconds is long enough to kill HIV. No amount of time seems to kill Hepatitis C. There is some word that hydrogen peroxide will kill Hepatitis C. If you really want to be careful, rinse with both.

Regardless of what you do, understand your risks. If you share syringes with others, you are putting yourself in danger. Under the best circumstances, never reuse a syringe. Barring that, only reuse your own syringe that you



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Last Modified: 9 January 2004

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