

Self-Inject Methotrexate? What is Sub-Cutaneous Methotrexate?

- **Methotrexate comes as tablets or as an injection.**
- Some people struggle with the tablets – nausea, vomiting, stomach pain
- For some people, the tablet just does not work

If this happens, we try to switch to methotrexate in the injection form under the skin.

Giving methotrexate by injection has **benefits**:

1. The injection results in complete / better absorption
2. You may respond better!
3. We will know how to change your dose

Can I inject the Methotrexate by Myself?

Yes, methotrexate can easily be injected by you or your family members.

The injections are only given once a week (like the tablets) and are relatively painless.

How do I receive my Injectable Methotrexate from the hospital?

Injectable Methotrexate is a clear yellow liquid.



Here are some important features of the vials of methotrexate:

For patients with arthritis, methotrexate is supplied as 50 mg in a 2 mL vial (25 mg per 1 mL).

The vial can be used for more than one dose because it contains a preservative called benzyl alcohol to keep it clean (sterile) between uses.

Check with your pharmacist to ensure that the **strength of methotrexate is 50 mg/2 mL** and that it **contains the preservative so you can use it more than once.**

The vial comes with a coloured protective cap that indicates the vial is new.

This cap is removed before use and does not re-attach.

Removing the cap exposes a rubber stopper on the top of the vial which is held in place by a metal ring.

Your needle is pushed through the rubber stopper to fill the syringe.

How should the Methotrexate be Stored?

Vials of methotrexate should be stored at **room temperature away from too much heat or cold** (not in a car glove compartment or above the stove)

Vials of methotrexate should be protected **from light**

I have never used Syringes and Needles Before – I Don't Know Anything about Them?

The syringe and needle come all as one unit. The syringe is long and thin with a very small, short needle attached to it, protected by a cap. The barrel of the syringe has the dose measuring scale on it. The syringe is to be used once only. The plunger is designed to be grasped at the end and it moves up and down to “draw up” and give the methotrexate. The needle cap is removed just before drawing up the medication

What Other Supplies will I Need?

1. Alcohol Single Use Swabs for cleaning the vial's rubber stopper
2. Cotton Balls

Syringes, needles, medication vials, alcohol swabs and cotton balls that have come in contact with medication, blood or body fluids cannot be disposed of in your rubbish at home. Instead, they are placed in a “sharps container”, classified as “biomedical waste”. You can use any puncture proof container with a tight lid such as liquid laundry detergent or bleach containers, metal coffee cans or vinegar container.

Your Pharmacy or Nursing sister or Doctor will take back your full container when you come to the hospital. Check with your Pharmacist or Medical Personnel about Sharps Containers



Don't throw your medical waste in the normal rubbish!!! Make a sharps bin from an empty coffee tin or bleach bottle!



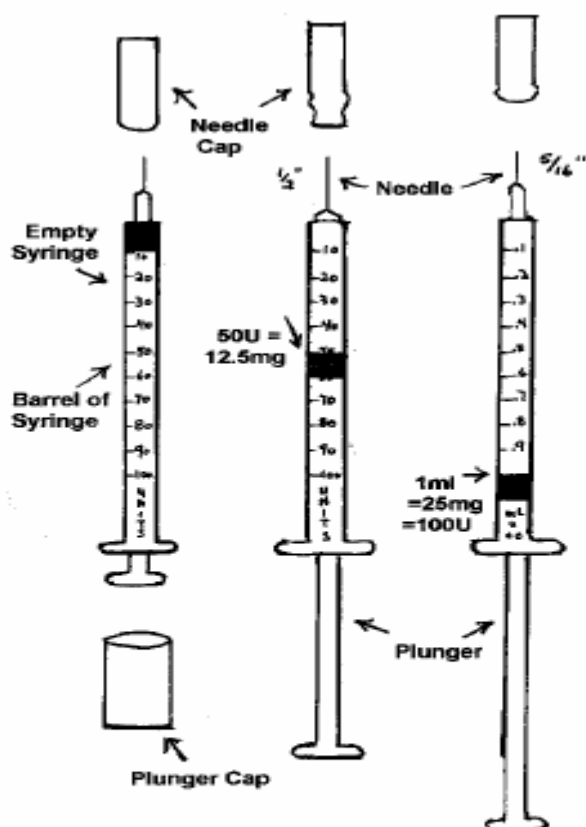
How do I Figure out the amount of Methotrexate to Inject?

1. look at your prescription

2. look at the chart below

Number of full doses contained in the vial based on dosage

Methotrexate dose		Number of units on syringe
7.5 mg	0.3 mL	30 U
10 mg	0.4 mL	40 U
12.5 mg	0.5 mL	50 U
15 mg	0.6 mL	60 U
17.5 mg	0.7 mL	70 U
20 mg	0.8 mL	80 U
22.5 mg	0.9 mL	90 U
25 mg	1.0 mL	100 U



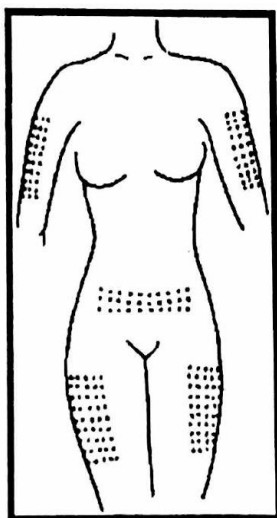
Diagrams - actual size of syringes

Note: different needle sizes

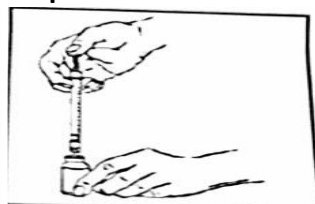
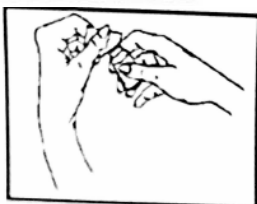
- Empty Syringe (left)
- Half-filled Syringe (middle) (50U= 12.5mg)
- Full Syringe (right) 1 mL=25mg =100U

HOW TO INJECT YOUR METHOTREXATE

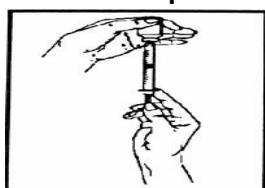
INSTRUCTIONS



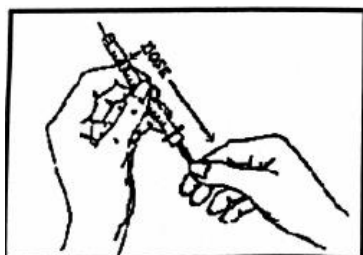
- Choose a clean work area
- Choose a site to inject “pinch an inch”
- Clean with soap and water:
 1. your work area
 2. your hands and
 3. your injection site
 4. Dry with clean towel.
- Open the MTX vial



Prepare your syringe and needle



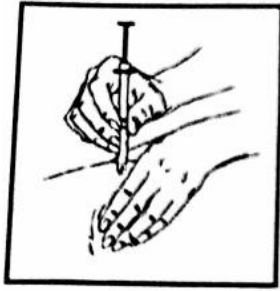
- Insert the needle into top of the vial and turn them upside down together
- Draw up your recommended dose of MTX
- Get rid of the air in syringe and make sure amount is correct



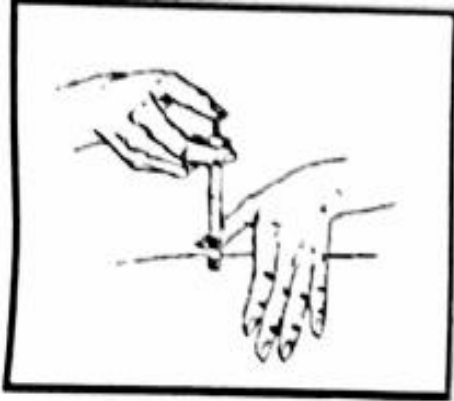
SOAP AND
WATER ARE JUST
FINE!!!

- Don't inject near the belly button (>3cm)
- Alternate sites every week
- Don't inject near scars, bruises, near to groin, joints or visible blood vessels

- Find your “inch to Pinch” and insert needle into soft tissue Inject the methotrexate straight into this soft tissue



- Pull out the needle
- Apply a bit of pressure with cotton wool on the injection site.
- A bit of blood is normal, so is a bit of MTX fluid (yellow)



- Close your syringe and throw away your vial and syringe into your sharps bag
- Clean your work area and wash your hands!
- Keep all these items away from children and pets

If you inject into muscle, this is ok!

**Sometimes the yellow fluid of the MTX goes into skin
this is also ok! WELL DONE!**

CLINICS CONTACT NUMBERS

**Arthritis Clinic (D6)
(021) 404 – 5394/5**

**Lupus Clinic (H Floor, OPD)
(021) 404 – 5313/5353**

Please call us and speak to a doctor or sister if you are unsure of anything.