

PATIENT INFORMATION

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SYRINGES AND SAFE SHARPS DISPOSAL

Sterile Syringes and Pharmacies

California law allows pharmacies to sell needles and syringes to adults age 18 and older without a prescription. There is no limit on the number of syringes an adult can buy.

People may lawfully possess syringes for personal use in California. There is **no age restriction** for personal possession. Also, there are **no limits** on the number of syringes a person can have.

Pharmacies are not required to sell syringes without a prescription and pharmacists can choose how many syringes to sell to a customer.

Needles and syringes need to be disposed of safely after use – they can't legally be thrown in the garbage. Ask your pharmacist whether they sell "sharps containers." Sharps containers are made of strong, puncture-proof plastic.

You can't put a sharps container in the garbage or recycling. Sharps containers must be taken to a location that knows how to handle them safely. To [find a location near you](https://safeneedledisposal.org), call 800-643-1643 or go to <https://safeneedledisposal.org>.

What to "Do" for Disposal:

- Use a sharps container that is made for disposing of needles.
- Immediately put used needles and syringes into your container with the point first.
- Keep the container closed between uses.
- Keep containers away from children and pets.
- Find out [where to dispose of your full containers](https://safeneedledisposal.org) at 1-800-643-1643 or online at <https://safeneedledisposal.org>.

The "Don'ts" of Disposal:

- Don't throw needles in the garbage, even if they are in a container. Containers can break in the garbage and needles can hurt sanitation workers.
- Don't flush needles down the toilet.
- Don't put sharps in aluminum cans, milk cartons, or any other containers that are not puncture-proof.

How do I find...?

For drug and alcohol treatment information call 1-800-662-4357.

For [HIV and hepatitis testing and treatment](https://gettested.cdc.gov/) call 1-800-232-4636 or go to <https://gettested.cdc.gov/>.

For [more information about access to sterile syringes](http://b.link/sharps-fyi) go to the California Department of Public Health, Office of AIDS website at <http://b.link/sharps-fyi>.

1 Stop using sharps container when 2/3 full or filled to FULL line.



2 Close sharps container as instructed on label.



3 Bring sharps container to a sharps disposal program.

