

Writing a label, opening an ampoule and drawing up medicine: *A step-by-step guide*

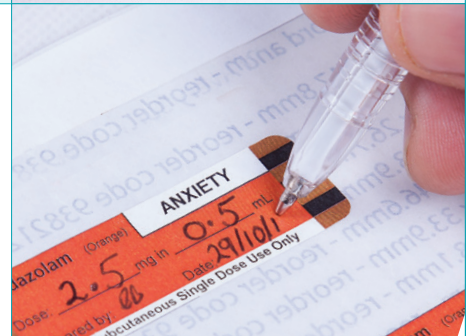
1. Collect the following items:

- A pen
- The colour-coded sticky label(s) for the medicine(s) and flush syringe(s)
- The ampoule(s) of medicine(s)
- The ampoule of sodium chloride 0.9% for flushing
- The screw-tip syringe(s)
- The blunt drawing-up needle(s)
- The cap(s) to screw onto the syringe(s)
- A clean container to put the equipment in
- A sharps container



2. Write the following details onto a sticky label for each medicine syringe to be prepared:

- The dose of the medicine contained in the syringe
- Initials of the person who prepared the syringe
- The date prepared



- * *The syringe containing sodium chloride 0.9% (the flush syringe) also needs to be labelled.*

3. Wash your hands with soap and water and dry them well



4. Attach the blunt drawing-up needle to the syringe by:

- Removing the syringe and the needle (with its protective cover) from the packaging without touching the open end of the syringe or the needle
- Twisting the needle, with its protective cover, onto the syringe

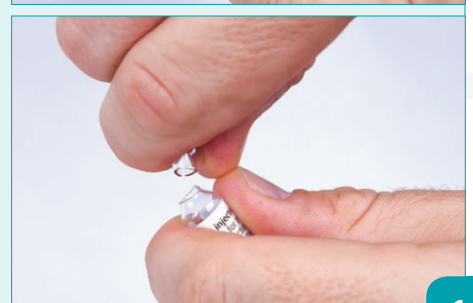


5a. Open a glass ampoule by:

- Holding the ampoule upright and gently flicking the top of the ampoule, with your finger, to move any medicine from inside the top of the ampoule to the bottom
- Placing your other thumb just above the neck of the ampoule and snapping the top of the ampoule away from you



- * *If there is a dot on the top of the ampoule make sure the dot is facing away from you.*
- * *If an ampoule shatters, discard it into the sharps container and start again.*
- * *Some people like to use non-slip material to hold the top of the ampoule.*
- * *Some services use ampoule openers – if so your nurse will teach you how to use one.*



5b. Open a plastic ampoule by:

- Twisting the top of the ampoule until it is removed



6. Draw the medicine into the syringe by:

- Removing the protective cover from the blunt drawing-up needle
- Inserting the needle into the ampoule then slowly pulling back on the syringe plunger



7. Remove air bubbles from the syringe by:

- Pointing the syringe upwards and flicking it with your finger to move any air bubbles to the top of the syringe
- Pushing the syringe plunger upwards slowly, until most of the air bubbles are removed and until you have the correct volume of medicine left in the syringe (you may see a small droplet of medicine come out – this is OK)



8. Twist the blunt drawing-up needle off the syringe and then place it in the sharps container



9. Twist the cap onto the end of the filled syringe



10. Place the completed label on the blank side of the syringe, trying to avoid all black line volume markings on the syringe



11. Dispose of the open ampoule(s) into the sharps container

12. Wash your hands with soap and water and clean up the work surface

If you are unsure or concerned, contact your nurse or doctor/nurse practitioner for further advice.