

# How to dispose of a syringe.

Community members often encounter syringes and syringe related litter. Follow this guide to minimize the risk of exposure to blood borne pathogens such as HIV and hepatitis C.

If you do not have access to a biohazard disposal box, use the thickest plastic container (such as containers for laundry detergent, bleach, or coffee grounds) in it's place. If you are able, secure the top of the container with durable tape, and label "biohazard container" before throwing away. Never recycle containers holding syringes.

## HOW TO DISPOSE:

01

Wear puncture proof gloves if you have access to them, or latex gloves to act as a barrier to pathogens.

02

Place a biohazard box or puncture proof container on stable/ level ground, and slide the syringe (grasping the barrel, point facing away) into the container.

03

Avoid hold the container when disposing of the syringe, as it increases the risk of accidental needle stick.

04

Dispose of the biohazard or hard plastic container in a syringe disposal box, or follow the instructions above.

## Do's & Don'ts:

Do:

- Wear gloves and closed toed shoes
- Wash your hands with warm soapy water after
- **Only dispose of syringes you're confident you can reach safely, without risk of needle stick exposure**

Don't:

- Try to recap uncapped syringes
- Hold the container you are inserting the syringe into for disposal (leave it on a stable surface and slide the syringe into the disposal box)
- Try to grasp the syringe by any part other than the barrel (the middle), this is the safest positioning to pick up a syringe



## Public Syringe Disposal Locations in Denver:

- Denver Fire Department: 19th & Lawrence, close to the alleyway
- McIntosh Park (Webb Building): 15th & Cleveland Place
- Governor's Park: N. Logan St. between E. 7th Ave & E. 8th Ave on the park access road
- King Soopers: 13th & Speer
- La Alma - Lincoln Park: 12th & Mariposa

## OTHER OPTIONS:

If you live in Denver, you can use any of the public disposals or contact the Harm Reduction Action Center about proper disposal. (HRAC.Denver@gmail.com)

If you live outside of Denver and are unable to properly dispose of a syringe or syringe related litter for any reason, check to see if your community has a syringe access program that could assist you: <https://www.nasen.org/map/>

If you experience an accidental needle stick exposure, wash the puncture with copious amounts of warm soapy water, and report to an emergency department as soon as possible.

Follow all post-exposure protocol, including discussing Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) with your physician. PEP can be taken up to 72 hours after exposure, but is most effective immediately.

It is extremely unlikely to contract any blood borne pathogens from non occupational needle stick exposure, however it is prudent to remain vigilant with post-exposure protocol.