

Inserting a subcutaneous cannula: A step-by-step guide

PLEASE NOTE: This step-by-step guide was specifically produced for non-paid carers looking after a person who has chosen to be cared for, and to die at home, if possible. For resolution of detail in the photographs no personal protective equipment (PPE) was worn. Please follow the local policy and procedures regarding the insertion of a subcutaneous cannula and wearing of PPE.

More information is available from www.caringathomeproject.com.au

STEP 1

Wash hands with soap and water and dry them well



STEP 2

Collect the following items:

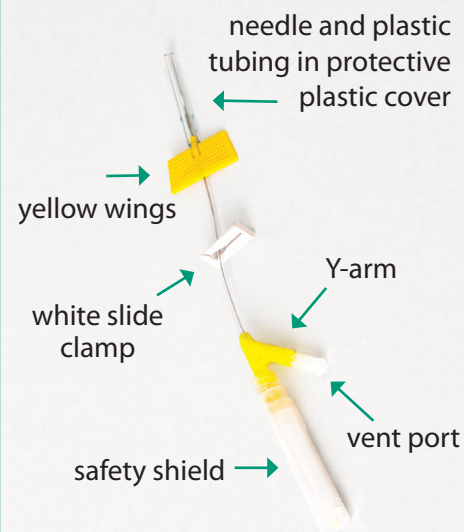
- A clean plastic container to put equipment in
- A subcutaneous cannula
- A transparent waterproof dressing
- An alcohol wipe or similar
- A smart-valve connector
- A sharps container
- A rubbish bag or bin



STEP 3

Prepare the cannula

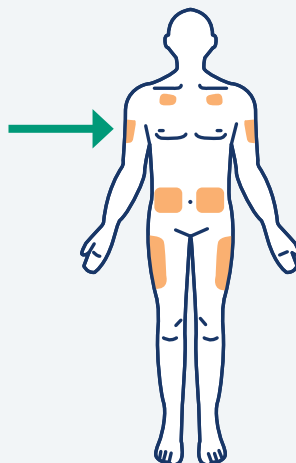
- Open the cannula packet keeping it in its clear case
 - Remove the white slide clamp
 - Rotate the safety shield tube 360 degrees clockwise to make sure that the needle moves freely in its protective plastic cover
 - Remove the plastic vent port from the Y-arm
 - Open the smart-valve connector packet, remove the clear plug and screw the connector onto the Y-arm until it is tight
 - Place the cannula into the plastic container
- Open the transparent waterproof dressing packaging and place the dressing in the plastic container
- Put the alcohol wipe in the plastic container



STEP 4

Prepare to insert the cannula

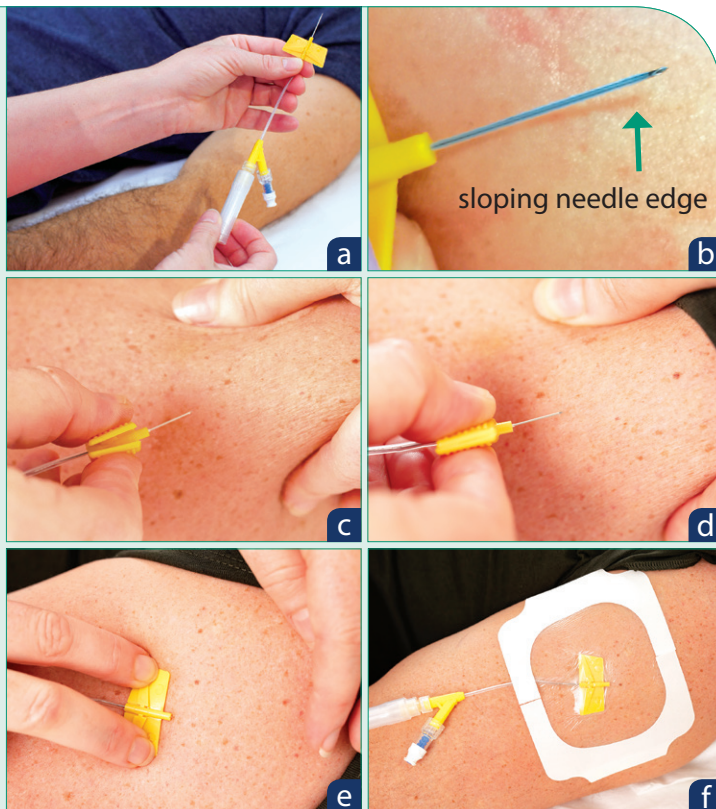
- Select a site to insert the cannula
- Use the alcohol wipe to clean the skin



STEP 5

Insert the cannula

- Peel the printed backing off the transparent waterproof dressing and leave it sticky side up
- Remove the protective plastic cover from the cannula needle and plastic tubing (a)
- Use the white safety shield to rotate the needle so that the sloping edge is on top (b)
- Gently gather the person's skin between your thumb and fingers and hold it firmly (c)
- Using your other hand, lift the edges of the yellow wings of the cannula so that the raised triangles on the wings come together (c)
- Hold the wings together and push the needle and plastic tubing into the skin, at a 45-degree angle until the whole needle is under the skin (d)
- Flatten the yellow wings against the person's skin (e)
- Stick the transparent dressing over the needle entry site, making sure that it also covers the flattened yellow wings of the cannula. **This is important to hold the cannula in place. (f)**



STEP 6

Set up the cannula

- Hold the yellow Y-arm firmly in one hand. **This is important, otherwise you may pull the plastic tubing out of the person, instead of just the needle. (a)**
- With your other hand, pull back **in a straight continuous motion** on the loosened white safety shield until the safety shield and needle separates from the cannula (b)
- Discard the safety shield with its needle into the sharps container (c)
- Remove the white backing, if present, from the outer edge of the dressing and smooth the edges onto the person's skin (d)
- Check the needle entry site to ensure the plastic tubing has stayed under the skin (e)
- Write the insertion date on the waterproof dressing.

