

SAFE DISPOSAL OF SHARPS

Sharps Disposal:

- Each year, Canadians use millions of syringes, needles, and lancets at home. These items are referred to as "sharps". It is important to dispose of your sharps in a safe way.
- The [Canadian Diabetes Association](#) (CDA) and local health boards have guidelines outlining the safe disposal of sharps. Check with local pharmacies, your health unit, and the CDA to find about the guidelines for your area.

Sharps Disposal Tips:

- Never dispose of sharps in garbage/recycling containers or by flushing down the toilet.
- The best way to dispose of sharps is to use a specially designed container made of hard, durable plastic. These containers are designed so that it is very difficult to remove sharps once they are inserted, and they are leak- and puncture-proof. They usually feature biohazard caution labels.
- Most pharmacies offer a sharps-disposal service to their customers. This service may be free, or a small fee may be charged to cover the cost of the container. Once you have filled your container with used sharps, you return it to the pharmacy in exchange for a clean, empty container; they dispose of your sharps in a safe manner.
- It is best to dispose of syringes with the needle intact, but you may choose to remove the needle from the syringe with a needle clipper. This is a device that clips the needle and traps it in a small, puncture-proof container. If you use a needle-clipping device, make sure that you still dispose of your syringes in a safe manner.
- Some public facilities (such as restaurants, hotels, and airports) have designated sharps-disposal receptacles in their restrooms. If you are away from home and this service is not available, keep your used sharps and dispose of them at home.
- Always ensure that sharps are kept safely out of reach of small children.