

What to do if you encounter a needle, crack pipe, or any other drug paraphernalia

If you choose to pick up a needle, crack pipe, or other drug paraphernalia, handle them with care and ensure to:

- Treat all needles, crack pipes, and other drug paraphernalia (cookers, blades, etc.,) as contaminated.
- Wear gloves (i.e. latex, rubber, or puncture proof). Note: Gloves are meant to protect against fluid contamination, not punctures or cuts.
- Use tongs, pliers, or tweezers to pick up the needle, crack pipe, or other drug paraphernalia. Be sure to clean and disinfect the pickup instrument afterwards.
- Pick up the needle by the plastic end (barrel).
- Point the needle tip away from your body. Be very careful not to poke yourself with the needle.
- Put the sharps disposal container on a stable surface next to the needle. Do not hold the container in your hand or between your knees or feet while placing the needle inside.
- Place the needle point down into the container. Do not force the needle into the container.



- If you do not have a specialized sharps container, put the needle into a non-breakable, puncture-proof container with a lid. (i.e., thick plastic bottle).



- Close the container securely.
- Find the nearest designated needle disposal location by visiting WDGPublicHealth.ca. Do not flush needles down the toilet or put them in the garbage or recycling bin.
- Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer after removal of gloves.



If a needle injury occurs wash the area well, let the wound bleed, do not apply pressure to the wound and seek immediate medical attention. For more information, visit WDGPublicHealth.ca

Always follow your organization's sharps disposal policies and procedures. If your organization has a contract with a licensed biomedical waste disposal company, properly secure the sharps and contact your contractor for final pickup and disposal.

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