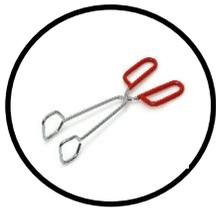




The Opioid Epidemic: Safe Disposal of Syringes

People who inject opioid use either needles or syringes. Other individuals, such as people who have diabetes, also use these for medical reasons. These “sharps” require safe disposal. Across NY, community members may find sharps around town or farmers may find them in their fields. This fact sheet details what to do if you find sharps.

PICK UP WITH TONGS



Wear gloves and use a pair of tongs or tweezers to pick up the sharp. Point the tip away from you. If you do not feel comfortable picking it up, call your local police department.¹

SECURE IN CONTAINER



Place the needle in a sturdy plastic container like a bleach container or plastic peanut butter jar, put the lid on, and seal it with duct tape. If you are disposing of multiple sharps, you can fill the container until it is 3/4 full.²

PLACE IN TRASH



Label it “Do Not Recycle” and place it in the trash. Sharps in a sealed container can also be brought to most hospitals or nursing homes in NY for disposal.²

WASH YOUR HANDS



Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.¹

- If you are stuck with another person’s used sharp, immediately wash the exposed area with water and soap, or use a skin disinfectant/antiseptic such as hand sanitizer or rubbing alcohol. Then seek medical attention from your local hospital or physician.³
- A health risk associated with injection drug use is the transmission of disease including HIV and all types of Hepatitis, especially Hepatitis C. However, with proper cleaning of drug equipment and appropriate healthcare, these health issues can be avoided, reducing the harm of opioid use. Click [here](#) to access resources for preventing these diseases.⁴