

What to do if you find a needle?

1. Do not be alarmed.
2. Get a heavy plastic container, that will not break easily, with a tight lid (e.g. used bleach bottles).
3. Bring the container to the needle and place it on the ground (somewhere it will not tip over).
4. Wear rubber cleaning gloves to protect yourself.
5. NEVER recap a needle!!
6. Do not touch the needle with your hands. Use BBQ tongs, pliers or another gripping tool to pick up the needle.
7. Put the needle into the container sharp end first.
8. Put the lid on the container.
9. A small number of needles, in a tightly closed heavy plastic container, can be put in a household garbage.
10. Wash your hands after you are finished.

Tell children never to pick up a needle and let an adult know if they find one.



You will need:

Heavy plastic container

Heavy rubber gloves

Gripping tool

Soap and water



Improperly disposed needles are becoming more common in public and private spaces.

In Newfoundland and Labrador the property owner is generally responsible for cleanup and maintenance of properties. Some municipalities may have staff trained to deal with needles so it is a good idea to contact your town hall and report the location and type of needles found. However, there will be times when you will want to remove the risk to family and loved ones immediately.

How to handle needles

What you will need:

- A heavy gauge plastic container with a tight lid that will contain the sharp points. Used bleach bottles are great, designated sharps containers are the best!
- Heavy rubber cleaning gloves are a good idea to protect yourself but any gloves will do.
- BBQ tongs, pliers or some other gripping tool that will allow you to pick up needles without having to handle them directly are recommended.
- Access to soap and water.

Collecting Needles:

- Ensure children have been cleared from the area or are closely supervised.
- Never handle a needle by the sharp end, keep the point away from your body and hands at all times.
- Never try to recap a needle! That is the most common way to stick yourself.
- Place your container near the needles and ensure it cannot tip over.
- Very carefully place each needle in the container, point down, one at a time.
- Once all of the needles have been collected walk around the area to ensure you have collected them all.
- Tightly screw the lid on the container.
- A small number of needles can be disposed of in municipal trash provided the container is strong and the cover fits tightly. Loose needles are a danger to municipal workers!
- Wash your hands even if you used gloves.

What to do if you prick yourself with a dirty needle:

- Allow the wound to bleed freely for a few minutes.
- Wash with soap and water.
- Apply alcohol or other available disinfectant to the wound and dress it with a bandage.
- Contact the HealthLine at 811, go to your family doctor or visit a local emergency room for further follow up.

