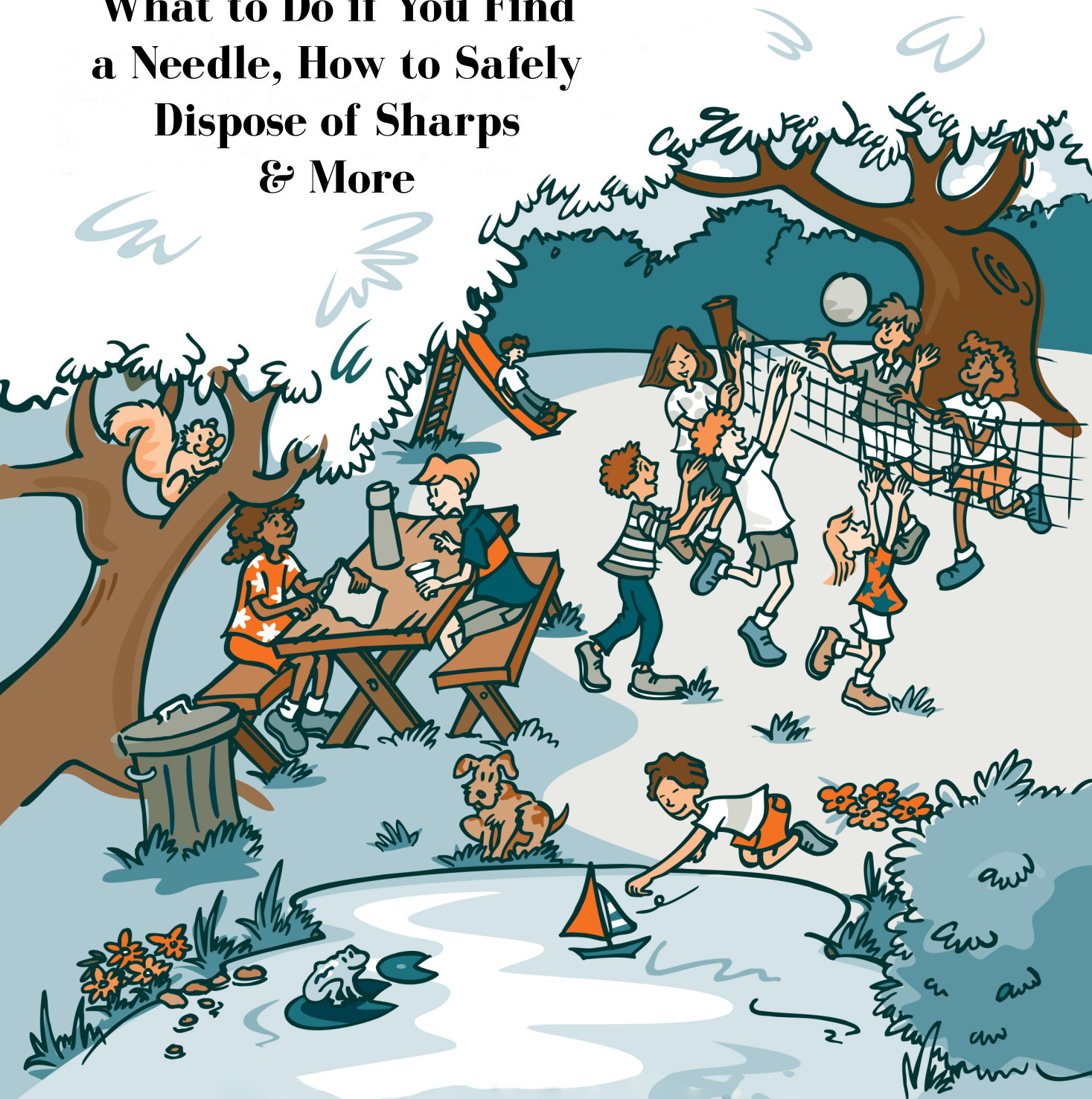


# How to Be Smart About Sharps

What to Do if You Find  
a Needle, How to Safely  
Dispose of Sharps  
& More



A Booklet for Children & Young Adults

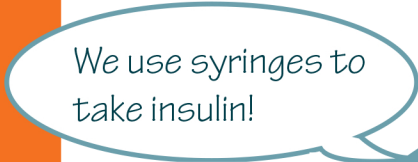
# Did You Know?



We use lancets to test our blood sugar level!

## What is a Needle?

A needle is a very thin piece of metal with a point at one end and a hole in it used for delivering medicine right into your body. A syringe is another name for a needle. They can be used to inject yourself, someone else, or even your pet with medicine.



We use syringes to take insulin!

## What is a Lancet?

A lancet is used to prick the skin and draw a very small amount of blood, which is then tested to keep you healthy. People with diabetes use lancets every day. They can also be used to test for allergies and other diseases.

People living in the US use more than ten billion (10,000,000) needles and lancets each year to take care of their diabetes, cancer, and other illnesses. This booklet shows you what needles are, the safe way to handle and get rid of them, and what to do if you find one. It's simple. The easy directions on the following pages show you how to protect your family and waste haulers from injury - and help keep the environment clean and safe!

## What Are Sharps Used For?

People and pets use sharps to treat all sorts of medical conditions at home. Sharps deliver medicine for conditions such as:

- Allergies
- Arthritis
- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Hepatitis
- HIV/AIDS
- Infertility
- Migraines
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Osteoporosis
- Psoriasis

## What Do I Do if I Find a Needle?

If you find a needle outside while playing at the park, on the street, at the beach, or just going for a walk, you should **never touch it**. Without going any closer to the needle, call for an adult. If there are other children playing in the area, make sure they don't come close to the needle either! If an adult can't hear you, remember where the needle is and tell them immediately.



## Why Shouldn't I Touch Needles?

Needles are very sharp, and therefore can stick you! A needlestick injury hurts, but it can also cause diseases, such as HIV or Hepatitis. Many people who use needles have diseases you don't want to catch, and therefore needles often have germs! If you find a needle, there is no way to tell who used it and what diseases they had, so you'll have to go for lots of tests at the doctor's office if you get stuck with it. If you don't touch the needle, there is no chance of getting stuck!

## What Happens if I Throw My Needles in the Trash?

Like anything else we throw out, lancets and syringes need to be disposed of properly. Otherwise they can end up in places they don't belong, like beaches. And because they have very sharp, pointy ends, they can hurt people by accident, like the person who collects your garbage, someone in your family, or even you!

But there's a simple way you can help protect people and the environment. It's quick and easy! Just follow these TWO steps...



Step

1

I use syringes and lancets at home.  
What should I do with them?

## Step One: Put Your Needles in a Sharps Container

After you've given yourself an insulin shot, put your syringe directly into a strong plastic or metal container with a tight cap or lid. After you use a lancet, you can put it into the same container too.



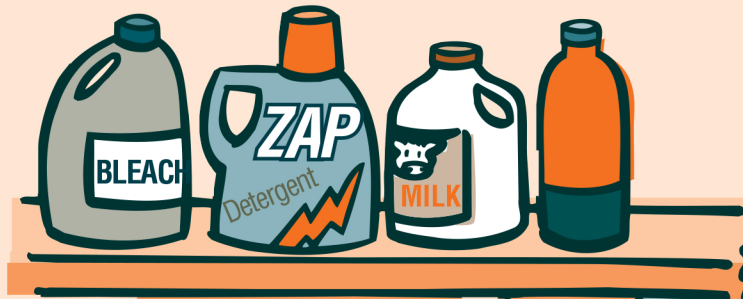
Don't try to bend, break, or put the cap back on your needle...you might hurt yourself!

Keep your container out of reach of small children and pets!

### Make It Easy

Keep your container in the same place you usually have your insulin shots. This helps you remember to check your blood sugar.





## Container Do's

The best containers to use are those that:

- ✓ Are made of strong plastic, so needles can't poke through.
- ✓ Have a small opening on top with a cap or lid that screws on tightly to prevent spills.
- ✓ Are not recyclable in your community. Put recyclable containers back into use whenever possible!

Many household items make good containers!



Some examples might include a plastic bleach jug, plastic liquid detergent bottle, or plastic milk jug. You can use a coffee can, too. But when it gets full, close the lid tightly and seal it with strong tape.



## Container Don'ts

- ✗ Don't use glass containers (they can break), or lightweight plastic containers.
- ✗ Don't use any container that will be returned to a store.
- ✗ If you use a recyclable container to dispose of syringes and lancets, be sure it doesn't end up in the recycling bin by mistake. These items are not recyclable, and could affect the safe and effective recycling of other items in the bin.
- ✗ **And don't use anything that's see through, like clear plastic soda bottles.**

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Step

2

# Step Two: Now You Get to Visit a Zeedle with Your Sharps Container!

## What is a Zeedle?

A Zeedle is a large metal kiosk placed in a drug store, fire station, police department, hospital, or other public places to collect used sharps. Once your sharps container is full of needles or lancets, they are then disposed of at a Zeedle location.

To use a Zeedle, just open the rolling door at the top and place your sharps container inside. When you let go, the Zeedle will take care of the rest on its own, making sure your needles are safe. The Zeedle waste is then collected by a medical waste company and destroyed, so they can never harm you or the environment.



# Word Scramble

1. Put your syringes and lancets into a strong \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ (CLIPAST) \_\_\_\_\_ container and tighten the \_\_\_\_\_. (LATME) (DLI)
2. When it gets full, reinforce the lid with \_\_\_\_\_ and throw your \_\_\_\_\_ into the \_\_\_\_\_! (RENTANOIC) ( EDEZEL )

CUT OUT THE BOTTOM OF THIS PAGE AND KEEP IT NEAR YOUR CONTAINER AS A REMINDER.



## Remember

### Step 1:

### Put Your Needles in a Sharps Container

After you use a syringe or a lancet, put it **directly** into a strong **plastic** or **metal** **container** with a tight cap or **lid**.



**Never throw needles in the trash!**

### Step 2: Zeedle It!

When the **container** is full and tightly sealed with heavy-duty tape, throw it out in the



**zeedle**  
needle and medication  
disposal

## **Congratulations!**

Now you know how to handle and throw out used insulin syringes and lancets safely.

## **Pass It On!**

Do you know others with insulin-dependent diabetes? Tell them what you've learned about handling and safe disposal of used syringes and lancets. By spreading the word, you can help others keep the environment clean and safe!

