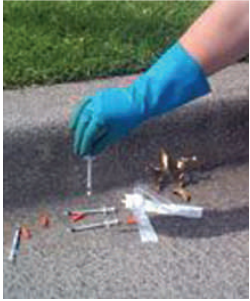


If you find a needle or mouthpiece and wish to dispose of it safely...



- Do not try to replace cap on needle
- Pick up needles with extreme care using work gloves and tongs or tweezers
- Hold needle point away from you



- Place needles in either a metal or thick plastic container with a cap.
- Replace cap on container securely.
- Containers may be disposed of by placing in the garbage or at community disposal site.



- Do not handle mouthpiece with bare hands.
- Use gloves and place into double bags.
- The bagged mouthpiece may be disposed of in the garbage.



- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water

What to do if you are pricked by a needle...

Being pricked by a needle can be frightening. It is important to know that the risk is low for catching diseases, and most people will not get sick by being pricked by a needle. Risks include acquiring tetanus, or Hepatitis B or C. The risk of contracting HIV is extremely low as this virus cannot live in the air for very long.

If you are pricked by a needle, please take the following precautions:

- Wash the pricked area with soap and warm water right away.
- Call the VIHA Communicable Disease Program (weekdays 8:30—4:30)

OR

**go to the nearest Hospital
Emergency Department**

VIHA Communicable Disease Program

Weekdays 8:30AM to 4:30PM

Toll Free Numbers

South Island 1-866-665-6626

Central Island 1-866-770-7798

North Island 1-877-887-8835

KEEPING OUR
COMMUNITIES SAFER
FOR EVERYONE

What To Do If You Find a Syringe or Other Drug Paraphernalia



Dear Community Member,



Every one of us strives for safe communities and safe neighbourhoods for our families, loved ones and pets.

Unfortunately, sometimes we are faced with having to pick up other people's litter, and sometimes this litter can pose a risk for a needle stick injury.

For example, you or a loved one may find a discarded syringe, a glass stem or plastic mouth piece used to smoke crack or any other sharp instrument on the ground. When this happens, it is important to remember that the number of these items discarded in the community are a small percentage of the total number of items distributed to drug users — the majority of used syringes, needles and mouthpieces are either disposed of by the users themselves, or collected by the numerous local agencies contracted to collect these items.

Problematic drug use is an unfortunate reality in our society. Throughout Vancouver Island, there are many different programs in place to support users to quit and/or reduce their habit. An important

part of the response to drug use and abuse is the prevention of communicable diseases such as Hepatitis C and HIV. The distribution of clean needles and crack pipe components for drug users is recognized as 'best practice' by Medical Health Officers throughout British Columbia, across Canada and internationally as a way to reduce disease transmission. While the distribution of clean needles and crack pipe components can be controversial and may raise concerns from some community members, it is important to note that this practice is not new and is an approach to harm reduction and disease prevention used throughout the world. Please see the BC HealthGuide website at:

<http://www.bchealthguide.org/healthfiles/hfile102.stm> for more information.

You can choose to dispose of a discarded needle, syringe or mouthpiece yourself. The risk in doing this is limited. But no matter how small the risk, there are steps you can take to diminish the risk even more. This pamphlet provides straightforward information about how to safely dispose of needles, syringes or mouthpieces and provides information on what to do if you sustain an inadvertent needle stick injury.

Agencies in your community are available to collect discarded needles.

Please call:

Victoria AIDS Resource & Community Service Society

1-250-888-4487

AIDS Vancouver Island

South Island **1-250-384-2366**

Central Island **1-250-753-2437**

North Island

Courtenay/Comox **1-250-338-7400**

Campbell River **1-250-830-0787**

Port Hardy **1-250-949-0432**



Some communities have drop boxes available. To find out if they are accessible in your area, contact your local municipal office.