Key Steps — Intramuscular injection

The key steps for this skill, in the order they are demonstrated in the video. Part of our Medication Administration skills collection.

- ☐ 1. Verify the medication order, and check the patient's identity and allergies.
- ☐ 2. Perform hand hygiene and prepare sterile equipment, keeping it sterile throughout.
- ☐ 3. Choose the site — deltoid, gluteal or vastus lateralis (lateral thigh) — and locate it using the landmarks for that site.
- ☐ 4. For the gluteal site, use the centre of the upper outer quadrant so the injection misses the sciatic nerve and major vessels.
- ☐ 5. Clean the site with an alcohol prep in a circular, outward motion, and let it dry.
- ☐ 6. Firm the tissue by squeezing it between your thumb and fingers.
- ☐ 7. Insert the needle with a quick thrust at a 90-degree angle to the skin.
- ☐ 8. Aspirate by gently pulling back the plunger. If blood appears, withdraw, apply direct pressure, and start again with a new sterile setup.
- ☐ 9. Inject the medication steadily, then withdraw the needle and massage the site.
- ☐ 10. Dispose of sharps safely and document the medication, dose, site and time.

Watch the demonstration: medicalvideos.com/watch/im-injection_3EtnYbMNlh5OnN2f0hgV.html • More Medication Administration skills: medicalvideos.com/nursing/medication-administration.html

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Steps summarise this demonstration for education and do not replace your institution's protocol, which always governs. Content reviewed by Dr. Mohamed Ibrahim, MD, PhD — physician-scientist. October 2026.