



# MAKE SMART INJECTION CHOICES

HOW YOUR SUPPORT  
CAN HELP MAKE ALL  
INJECTIONS SAFE



For Donors



World Health  
Organization

# SAFE INJECTION CHOICES MATTER



Donors can help save lives by funding programmes that make injections safe.

Safe injections are important to protect human health and treat diseases, but many injections around the world are unnecessary and often unsafe. Unsafe injections **put lives at risk** and every year cause 1.67 million hepatitis B infections, up to 315 120 hepatitis C infections and up to 33 877 human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infections.<sup>1,2</sup>

The World Health Organization (WHO) 2015 Guidelines recommend rational use of injections, safe injection practices and the exclusive use of safety-engineered syringes for all types of injections by 2020. Safety-engineered syringes exist for both immunization and therapeutic

use and are those which have mechanisms preventing the re-use of the device and/or protecting health care workers from injuries from a needle. WHO has also developed a strong implementation strategy and a package of practical tools to support country injection safety initiatives.

Donors can play an important role in supporting the implementation of these recommendations.

## SUPPORTIVE DONOR ACTION

### How can action by donors help to promote safe injections?

- Make sure any funded injectable medicines project is bound by the procurement and use of safety-engineered syringes and the implementation of safe injection practices, in line with WHO 2015 injection safety recommendations.
- Support governments in the initial steps to procure safety-engineered syringes and then to implement new injection safety action.

**Your support can help reduce avoidable infections and save lives.**

1. Pepin et al. Evolution of the global use of unsafe medical injections, 2000-2010. PLoS One. 2013 Dec 8;12:e80948.

2. Pepin et al. Evolution of the global burden of viral infections from unsafe medical injections, 2000-2010. PLoS One. 2014 Jun 9;9(6):e99677.

# HOW CAN AN INJECTION BE UNSAFE?

## UNSAFE INJECTION PRACTICES

The global burden of unsafe injection practices is caused by avoidable risky situations and practices including:

- ❌ Lack of awareness of the risks of unsafe injections.
- ❌ Overuse of injections for illnesses for which oral medications are the best first-line treatment.
- ❌ Needle-stick injuries to health care workers from recapping needles.
- ❌ Lack of clean work spaces.
- ❌ Re-use of syringes because of shortages of sterile single-use syringes.
- ❌ Unsafe sharps collection and waste management.



## SAFETY FIRST

One of the most effective ways to avoid injection-associated infections is to reduce the number of injections given in hospitals and clinics. As many as 70% of injections are unnecessary, or could be replaced by oral medications that are safer and equally effective.

Providing funding to promote safe injections will result in:

- ✅ **Savings** on health care expenditure for the diagnosis and treatment of blood borne infections such as hepatitis B and hepatitis C.
- ✅ **Savings** through reductions in unnecessary injections.
- ✅ **Improvements** in the quality and safety of health care through the adoption of best practice.

# STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

## WORKING TOGETHER

Hundreds of thousands of people could be protected from infections acquired through unsafe injections by using syringes that cannot be used more than once.

If you are considering making a donation, or are already a donor, your funding can help provide holistic, safe injection practices.

This means looking at the whole injection cycle – from safe production and supply of injection devices, to waste management, to health promotion including communications and advocacy campaigns aimed at the public and community, as well



as health care worker engagement, training and education on WHO recommended safety-engineered syringes and safe injection practices.

By forming effective partnerships with governments, donors can help leverage their knowledge, expertise, resources and capacities to support initiatives that ensure injection safety campaigns are appropriate for, and respond to, the experiences, need and concerns of the populations they serve.

**By working together, you can help ensure the risks of unsafe injections are avoided.**



For further information please visit: [www.who.int/infection-prevention](http://www.who.int/infection-prevention)