



DIABETES AND “SHARPS” DISPOSAL

PATIENT/FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET

Why is proper disposal of “sharps” important?

“Sharps” refers to lancets used for testing blood sugar as well as needles and syringes used to inject medications, such as insulin. Proper disposal of these sharp objects reduces the chance that someone will be accidentally pricked by a used “sharp.”

What is an acceptable way to discard “sharps”?*

Lancets and needles should be disposed of in a strong plastic or metal container with a tight lid or cap.

- The best containers have a small opening on top to prevent spills, such as plastic laundry detergent bottles or dish detergent bottles.
- If using a recyclable container, clearly mark it “**Not for recycling**” before putting in the household trash. **Do not place in the recycling bin.**
- When the container is $\frac{3}{4}$ full it should be capped securely and reinforced with heavy-duty tape.

* These EPA recommendations apply to Connecticut and Westchester County, NY. If outside of these areas, contact the local or state EPA office or health department.

Are there any other recommendations for safely disposing of “sharps”?

- Dispose of syringes without bending, breaking or recapping the needle to prevent injury.

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