

REALITY CHECK!

Rotating your spot is recommended, but sometimes you may not have the veins, or the time to find one.

Think about these things:

- Do your best when you're in a hurry, but if you're NOT in a hurry, why rush the shot?
- Save the "easy" spots for when you KNOW you don't have time. The veins in your hand look tempting, but if you're not in a hurry, then save them for when you need them. They are delicate and you can lose them fast.
- If you are panicking about your shot, that is when you could blow your vein! Steady! Take a deep breath. Try to remember what calm feels like.

STUFF YOU KNOW ALREADY

(but a reminder won't hurt!)

- Try to find a place to get off where there's lots of light. Plan ahead.
- Use a new needle every time you possibly can! A sharp point saves lots of wear and tear on veins.

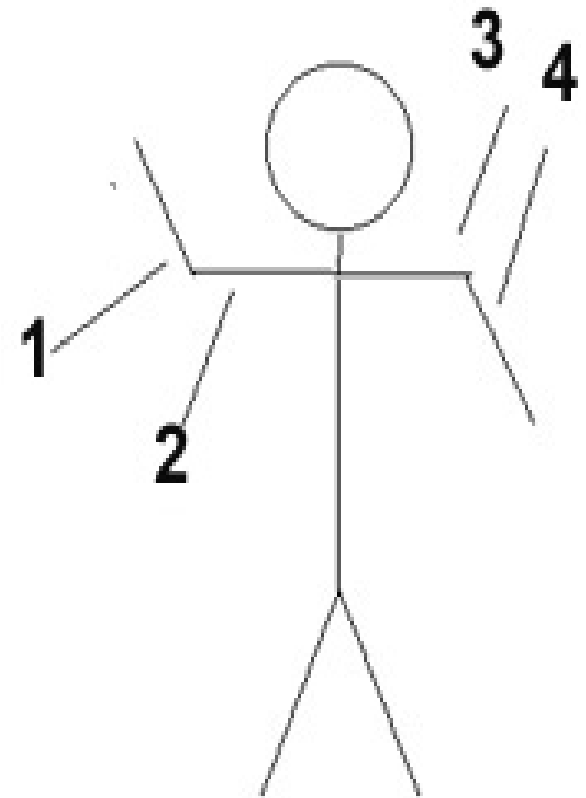


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EVERYONE is entitled to take care of themselves, whether they use drugs or not. Learning to take care of yourself takes time and thought. Talk to your friends, find out what they know

TAKING CARE OF YOUR VEINS:

ROTATE YOUR SPOT!



WHAT DOES “ROTATE YOUR SPOT” MEAN ?!?!?

When you stick a needle in your skin, it leaves a hole that needs to heal. *The same is true with your veins.* You can keep your veins in good shape if you let a spot heal before you hit on it again.

If you don't let your veins heal, you may get:

- Collapsed veins (you lose the vein totally)
- Infections
- Leaky veins, wasted shots
- Abscesses from leaks and missed shots
- Sticking a needle through a hole that isn't healed can push a blood clot into your bloodstream. This clot could get stuck somewhere else in your body, including your brain. This is really dangerous.

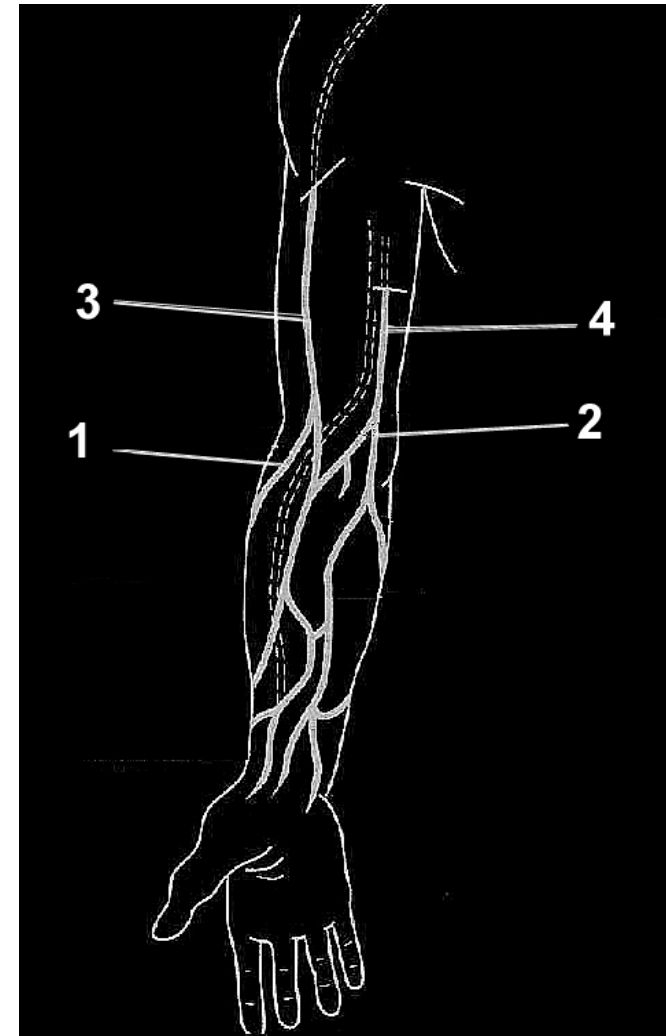
SO WHAT CAN YOU DO?: You can let one spot heal while you use another!

ROTATING YOUR SPOT: You let one spot heal while you use another.

HERE ARE SOME IMPORTANT TIPS. SOME OF THESE THINGS MAY BE A LUXURY, SOME MAY BE EASY. YOU ARE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN DECIDE:

- Its best to alternate veins. A vein takes *at least* a couple days to heal. More time is better.
- If you use the same vein, shoot **DOWNSTREAM** from your last shot (that means closer to your heart. Look at the picture). Shooting downstream from your last hit means you won't be pushing any blood clots into your bloodstream.
- If you hit yourself, practice injecting with your other hand, in your other arm. It may be awkward, but it gives you more options.
- If you can, tie off (use a tourniquet). This makes finding a vein A LOT easier. But once the needle is in the vein, TAKE THE TIE OFF before you hit! Leaving the tie while you hit on puts too much pressure on the vein, and you could lose the vein!

EXAMPLE



The numbers go **DOWNSTREAM** (closer to the heart) with each shot This is only an example: You have to figure out what works best with the veins you have.