

Title: Risk Reduction

Page 1:

Text: What is Risk Reduction?

Explanation page:

- Harm Reduction is not encouraging drug use!
- Harm Reduction is an attempt to decrease the adverse consequences of illicit drug use.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Don't relapse!- If you relapse, then don't inject!- If you inject, don't re-use equipment!- If you re-use injecting equipment, use your own, NEVER SHARE INJECTING EQUIPMENT!- If you have to share your or others equipment, clean it thoroughly! |
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Text in blue: harm reduction is like seat belts in cars: it does not prevent car accidents from occurring and does not encourage to drive fast, but when these accidents do occur, the wearing of seat belts significantly decrease the mortality and injury rates among the occupants of the cars.

Page 2:

Text: What is safe injecting?

Explanation Page:

- Safe injecting is injecting in a safe place using a safe method.
- Safe injecting is injecting in veins. Veins are blue and have no pulse. Veins are filled with dark red blood.
- Don't inject in arteries. Arteries have a pulse. Arteries are filled with bright red, pinkish blood. If you hit an artery, it can create an important hemorrhage and cause death.

Page 3:

Text: How can you choose a safe injecting site?

Explanation page:

- Choose a safe injecting site: Don't inject repeatedly on the wound. It can prevent infection and damage to the veins.
- Regularly change injection site to prevent bruising, abscess and damage to the veins. It allows veins to rest and recover.
- Arms are the sites of first choice for injecting.
- The veins in the hands are highly visible but small and fragile.
- Feet are sometimes used, but the blood flow is too slow, local infections might lead to loss of mobility. Injuries might heal slower.

Dangerous injecting site:

- Groin **VERY DANGEROUS:** can hit important arteries and nerves, leading to immense pain and even paralysis
- Breast **DANGEROUS:** very small veins, risks of infections
- Armpit: **VERY DANGEROUS:** Risk of hitting nerves and arteries.
- Neck: **VERY DANGEROUS:** Risk of hitting nerves, arteries and tendons.
- Penis: **DANGEROUS:** Almost impossible to avoid infection.
- Head: very dangerous. Risk of hitting very dangerous areas. Almost impossible to manage abscesses or ulcers.

Page 4:

Text: Safe Injecting Preparation (1)

Explanation Page:

- Wash your hands and the place you are going to inject. Use (if possible) hot water and soap, and then disinfectant.
- If you don't have soap and water, a piece of clean cloth is better than nothing.
- Before starting injecting, everything should be within reach; new and sterile injecting equipment, sterile water, clean spoon, clean filter, clean tourniquet and clean sterile swabs.
- Disinfection of the injecting site: Rub the area in one direction from the centre toward the outside. The swabs that rub the outside can't rub inside.

Page 5:

Text: Safe Injecting Preparation (2)

Explanation Page:

- Use new sterile injecting equipment to draw up sterile water. If sterile water is not available, cooled-down boiled water should be used.
- Sterile water (if possible) should be added to the drug and then mixed. The blunt end (the plunger) of the clean syringe can be used for mixing. Fingers or sticks picked up from the floor should never be used. The water should also never be shared.
- Draw up the drug solution through a filter in order to avoid injecting impurities. The best filters are a cotton bud or a cotton wool. If possible, cigarette filters should not be used, as they may contain tiny glass fibres, which can damage veins. The filter should never be reused or shared.
- Remove air bubbles by pointing the needle skywards and gently flicking the syringe on the side near the needle. Push the plunger up slowly until the air bubbles escape through the eyes of the needle.
- **NEVER** lick or blow on the tip of the needle: the mouth contains organisms, especially fungus, which can cause infection when injected.

Page 6:

Text: How to inject safely?

Explanation page:

- If using tourniquet, place it around or just above the injection site. Do not keep it too long: never more than one minute. If you can't find a vein in more than one minute, please loose the tourniquet, have a rest and than inject again.
- Use a good shape vein, without abscess, infection or other damage. If the vein is difficult to find, run warm water over the injecting site to help the vein rise. Other methods include wind milling the arm, having a hot bath or shower or any vigorous exercise.
- The needle should be slowly inserted into the arm at a 15-35 degree angle with the hole of needle facing upwards. Jack back: push the plunger partly down, pull it back letting blood enter the syringe. This is important because it can warn if you have injected into an artery instead of a vein.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Arterial blood is bright and frothy, compared to venous blood which is dark➤ Arterial blood is under high pressure, and difficult to inject into➤ Arteries are deep➤ If you suspect an artery has been hit, immediately pull the needle out; apply pressure for minimum 15 minutes; raise the limb; if bleeding does not stop, seek urgent medical treatment |
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- When sure that the needle is in the vein, loosen the tourniquet and gently push down the plunger. If there is pain or resistance, you may have missed the vein so start again.
- Inject slowly, as it causes less damage to the vein.
- Remove the needle slowly, and apply pressure

Page 7:

Text: The risks of reusing injecting equipment!

(Under the pictures of needles, from top to down: new needle, needle used once, needle used twice, needle used six times)

Explanation page:

Text in blue:

Injecting equipment can only be used once; all injecting equipment should never be shared.

- Reusing syringes will more damage to vein. , and other injecting equipments (filters, swabs and water) all can carry bacteria that can cause infections and “dirty hits”. Use them ONCE then discard; never share ANYTHING you use to inject.
- Used needles can also hurt the veins
- Used syringes, and other injecting equipments (filters, swabs and water) all can carry HIV or hepatitis virus.

Text in Blue:

If any abscess or ulcer appear on the injecting site, please see a doctor right away, as it can cause serious problems.

Page 8:

Text: How to disinfect injecting equipment? 3X2X6

Explanation Page:

Text from the safe injecting brochure.

Plus text in Blue:

- Cleaning equipment with plate clean water and soap water is not enough to protect you against various infections. Alcohol and medical alcohol is hard to use properly to clean the syringe. We not advocate you to use them to clean your syringe.
- If the condition is so hard and there is no way to disinfect the injecting equipments, can use the flow water to clean the injecting equipments. But actually, it doesn't work.

Page 9:

Text: What are you doing with your used injecting equipment?

Text: If you have been injecting,

Explanation Page:

Used syringes lying around upset both the general community and the police. It is an extra reason for communities to exclude and stigmatize drug users even more.

- Show you are responsible; don't leave your injecting equipment around, bring it back to the place you bought it, to the nearest NSP spot or to the local hospital.

Page 10:

Text: What is an overdose? What can we do?

Explanation Page:

An overdose is taking of more of more of a drug than is required or safe. The line between enough and too much of a certain drug is indeed very thin.

- A cocktail of many different drugs: poly-drug use (especially heroine combined with alcohol or benzodiazepines or any CNS depressant –for example mixing heroin with An Ding aka valium) increases the risk of an overdose.
- The highest risks of overdose is related to injecting
- Allergic reactions can lead to overdose
- Lowered tolerance of the individual, especially on release of detox-centre, relapse from detoxification or any other break from use increases the likelihood of an OD, even if the break is only for a few days.
- Higher stress increases the risk of OD

Signs or symptoms:

- Pinpoint pupils
- Bluish tinge to the skin, especially around the lips
- Shallow or absent breathing

- User feels cold to the touch
- User is unresponsive

Management

- Ensuring that the airway is not blocked with vomit or the tongue.
- Placing the person in the recovery position
- Attempting to rouse the person, **call their name, tell them you will call an ambulance if they don't respond to you which usually gets a good response.**
- Keeping the person awake if you could rouse him/her
- Send to hospital as soon as possible
- Giving cardiac massage and mouth-to-mouth resuscitation if necessary.
- Do not try to make the person vomit

Page 11:

Text: Women and drug use? What are the specific problems?

- Explanation Page:
 - The use of drugs can have an influence on the sex life and the menstrual cycle. But drug-using women can still become pregnant, even though the menstrual cycle might be disrupted.
 - Women can suffer from a “dry” vagina when using certain drugs (e.g. amphetamines). The use of a lubricant during vaginal sexual contacts is strongly advised to avoid wounds and injuries.
 - While high on drugs (including alcohol), there is a greater chance for risk taking and thus unsafe sex. Furthermore, certain drugs, like (meth-) amphetamine, cocaine and XTC ecstasy can give rise to prolonged and/or “violent” sex and enhance the risks for STIs.
 - **Drug use is dangerous during pregnancy and breastfeeding.** It would be ideal to stop using drugs during pregnancy and breastfeeding. Nevertheless, a sudden stop in drug use might be very difficult or impossible to achieve. If possible, seek medical follow-up!
 - Stimulants, like amphetamines, are the most dangerous drugs to use during pregnancy: great risk of miscarriage, premature birth and birth defects.
 - With heroine and other opiate, miscarriages and premature birth can also happen, especially when the mother is sick or goes to withdrawal.
 - Breastfeeding is dangerous during drug use as many drugs can enter the mother's milk. Babies can experience many health problems, even sometimes overdose.
 - Feelings of guilt and depression are not uncommon during pregnancy or after delivery, greatly increasing relapse risks.