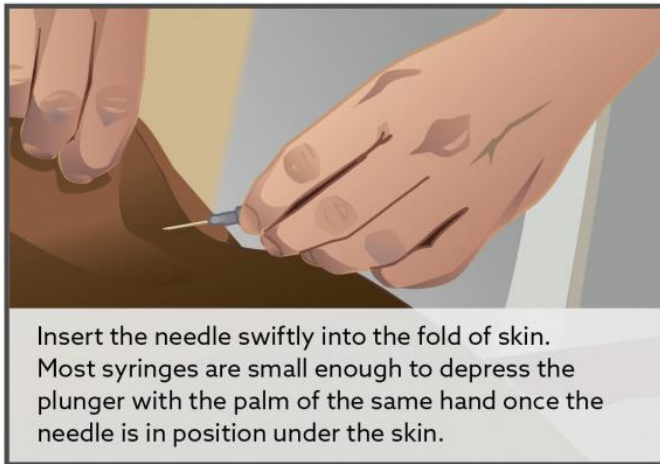


# Giving Injections to Cats



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Certain medical conditions require drugs that are only available in an injectable format. Two of these conditions are:

- diabetes mellitus, which is controlled by daily insulin injections; and
- certain allergies, which are controlled by regular injections of allergenic extracts.

In many cases, cat owners can administer these medications

at home. If you decide to provide this treatment to your cat, your veterinarian will review the specific technique and make sure that you are comfortable with it. The following information may help you make your decision.

## Will the injection be painful?

Most cats do not seem to mind routine injections. Disposable, single-use needles ensure that the needle tip is very sharp to minimize pain. Your veterinarian will prescribe the appropriate needles and syringes for your pet's needs.

## What happens if my cat moves when I give the injection?

Ideally, have someone assist while you give the injection, especially for your first few treatments. Try offering your cat a special food or treat as a distraction while you administer the injection. Some pet owners find it is easier to give their cat an injection while she is eating a meal.

**"Try offering your cat a special food or treat as a distraction while you administer the injection."**

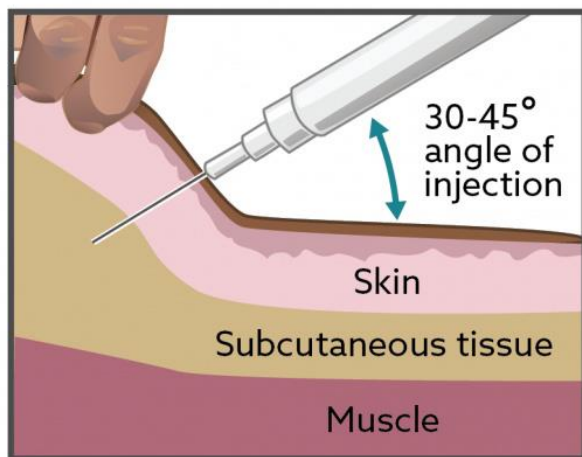
In the case of a diabetic cat, insulin is often injected after the cat has eaten. Cats with diabetes or those with allergies may be restricted from getting

treats or may need prescription treats. Speak to your veterinarian to determine if you can give treats or food while administering the injection. By injecting quickly, you can minimize the chance your pet will move. Most pet owners find their pet becomes more cooperative once a routine is established.

## Is there any danger if she doesn't keep still?

Most owners are concerned they may break the needle off in the skin, but this is extremely unlikely. The needle may bend, but it is much more likely that the injection will end up outside the pet rather than inside, when dealing with a wiggly pet. If you are unsure if your pet received the full amount of the injection, contact your veterinary hospital for instructions. Do not administer more unless directed by your veterinarian.

## Can you explain the technique of giving an injection?



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Injections are given in the subcutaneous tissue (sub = under, cutaneous = skin), which is considerably looser in a cat than in a human.

- Pinch some loose skin along your cat's back between your thumb and forefinger. The space between the shoulder blades works well as it produces ample skin to work with.
- Hold the syringe firmly in your dominant hand in a way that feels comfortable. Do not place your hand or finger over the plunger of the syringe in case your cat suddenly moves and pushes your hand, resulting in the contents being wasted or accidentally injected.
- Insert the needle swiftly into the fold of skin, with the needle angled downwards at a 30-degree to 45-degree angle. Most syringes are small enough to allow the plunger to be depressed with the palm of the same hand once the needle has been positioned underneath the skin.

- Administer the contents of the syringe quickly and withdraw the needle.
- Gently massage the area.

Having someone assist you will make the procedure easier. If you have a long-haired cat, you may need to part the fur or have your veterinarian shave a small patch so you can be more precise. With a little practice, most pet owners find they have no problems administering routine injections to their cat without assistance.

## **How should I dispose of the needles and syringes?**

You should be aware that some communities have strict rules about disposal of medical waste material, so do not throw the needle and syringe into the trash until you know if this is permissible. It is usually preferable to take the used needles and syringes to your veterinary clinic or local pharmacy for proper disposal.

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