

HOME TREATMENT

- Apply a heat source to help it drain & heal faster- such as a clean warm cloth
- Keep it clean
- **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CUT THE ABSCESS**
- Let it drain naturally & don't squeeze it

WHEN TO SEEK HELP

If you have a fever, or the abscess has red streaking around it, over 2 cm in size, **OR** if it just won't heal

YOUR ABSCESS MAY NEED TO BE CUT & DRAINED IN A STERILE ENVIRONMENT

YOU ALSO MAY NEED ANTIBIOTICS SO THE INFECTION DOESN'T GO INTO YOUR BLOODSTREAM TURNING INTO SEPSIS



REFERENCES & RESOURCES

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Interior Health Peer Advisory Group

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ABSCESS

WHAT IS AN ABSCESS? WHAT TO DO IF YOU DEVELOP AN ABSCESS & HOW TO CARE FOR IT



AN ABSCESS CAN BE A HIGH RISK COMPLICATION OF INTRAVENOUS DRUG USE

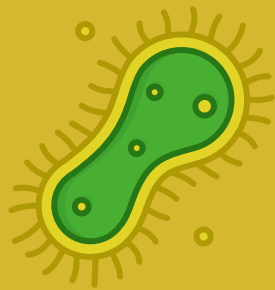
TREAT EARLY TO AVOID COMPLICATIONS

SEEKING HELP AND EXPOSING AN INJECTION SITE CAN BE A VULNERABLE THING. BRING SOMEONE YOU TRUST



WHAT IS AN ABSCESS?

- An abscess is an infection under the skin
- Caused from a virus, bacteria, or parasite (from unsanitary water or cottons)



WHAT CAUSES AN ABSCESS?

- Sharing or reusing needles and supplies
- Missing your vein when injecting
- Using too much unsterile acidifier
- Not cleaning the site before injecting
- Skin popping & Muscle popping

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- Hot to touch
- Redness
- Pus
- Fever
- Streaking
- Swelling
- Can show up anywhere on the body, but most likely at injection site



HOW TO PREVENT GETTING AN ABSCESS?

- Cleanse your hands with soap and water or sanitizer
- Cleanse the injection site with an alcohol swab
- Always use new supplies
- Avoid licking your needle



COMPLICATIONS OF AN ABSCESS

SEPSIS: A blood infection that is characterized by fever or chills, sweating, tiredness, racing heart, difficulty breathing

PRO TIP:
DRAW A CIRCLE AROUND YOUR ABSCESS TO MONITOR ITS SIZE



For more information on the use of SteriFilt's please see: BCCDC SteriFilt Link on (towardtheheart.com)

DID YOU KNOW?

SKIN POPPING (INJECTING IN THE LAYER BETWEEN YOUR SKIN & FAT) & MUSCLE POPPING (PUTTING THE NEEDLE STRAIGHT DOWN & DEEP INTO THE MUSCLE) PUTS YOU AT A GREAT RISK FOR DEVELOPING AN ABSCESS

IF YOU MUST POP: MAKE SURE TO FILTER YOUR DRUGS USING A STERI-FILT OR CLEAN COTTON