

# What do you do when you find a needle in the community?



Finding needles in the community is a health and safety concern. Everyone needs to know what to do when a needle is found.

## Are these needles dangerous? Yes.

- When a needle has been used, there is often blood inside.
- This blood can contain germs.
- Some of these germs can cause serious diseases like Hepatitis and HIV/AIDS.
- If a person is poked by a needle, he or she may become infected with a disease.

## How can you safely get rid of a used needle?

- Get a glass jar or other hard container that needles cannot poke through.
- Make sure the container has a lid. Use a bottle, coffee tin, peanut butter jar or any such container.
- Pick up the needle by the end that is not sharp and always keep the pointed end away from you.
- DO NOT put the cap back on the needle; many injuries have happened that way.
- Put the needle in the container.
- If there is a needle cap, put it in the container too. Put the lid on the container.
- Wash your hands.
- Store the container in a safe place and away from children.
- Drop off the container at a local needle exchange.
- If you do not live in a center with this service, put the container in the garbage on garbage pickup day.



## What should you tell children about finding needles?

- Tell children to NEVER touch or pick up any needles.
- Children should always get help from an adult.



## What should you do if you poke yourself with a needle?

- Encourage the wound to bleed by gently squeezing it.
- Immediately wash the wound and area with soap and water.
- Immediately go to the Hospital Emergency Department.



## What if you use needles at home for medical reasons?

- People who use sharps/needles routinely should get an approved sharps container with a biohazard sign.
- Sharps containers can be disposed of in your regular garbage.
- Follow the same steps described earlier to dispose of your needles.
- Fill a container only three quarters (3/4) full. If it is too full, the needles may poke through the side.
- Carefully store needle containers away from children.
- By safely getting rid of your needles, you will be helping to provide a safe environment for everyone.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Please visit Prairie North Health Region's Website

[www.pnrha.ca](http://www.pnrha.ca)

or the Lloydminster and Area Drug Strategy's Website

[www.drugfreeloydminster.com](http://www.drugfreeloydminster.com)