

ADMINISTERING DRUGS BY INJECTION

There are certain conditions or diseases that may require you to administer injections to your cat at home. Routine injections are necessary for the treatment of diabetes using insulin, for the control of skin allergies using allergenic extract injections, and occasionally for other reasons. There are some cats who accept injections much more readily than oral medications. Your veterinarian will review the specific administration technique but the following questions and answers may be of help.

Will the injection hurt my pet?

Most pets don't seem to mind routine injections. Disposable single-use needles ensure that a very sharp needle is used each time. Your veterinarian will prescribe appropriate needles and syringes based on your pet's needs.



How can I keep my cat from moving when I give the injection?

Ideally, have someone assist you while you give the injection, especially when you are just learning how to do it. Try offering the pet a special food or treat as a distraction while you administer the injection. By injecting quickly, you can minimize the chance that your pet will move. Most pet owners find that their pet is very cooperative once a routine is established.

Is there any danger if he doesn't keep still?

Most owners are concerned that they may break the needle off in the skin but this is extremely unlikely to occur. The needle may bend, but it is much more likely that the injection will end up outside the pet rather than inside. If you are unsure that your pet received the full amount of the injection, contact the hospital for instructions. As a general rule, if you're unsure how much you injected, *do not* administer more unless directed by your veterinarian. In any event, it is very unlikely that any harm will result if your pet moves during an injection, even if the needle is bent in the process.

Can you explain the exact technique of giving an injection?

Subcutaneous injections are placed just beneath the skin, which is considerably looser in the cat than in humans. Start by gently "pinching" some loose skin between your thumb and forefinger. Hold the syringe like a pencil with the other hand. Insert the needle swiftly into the fold of skin, keeping the barrel roughly level with the fold but with the needle angled downwards at a thirty- to forty-five-degree angle. Most injections are given in syringes small enough to allow the plunger to be depressed with the palm of the same hand or the thumb, once the needle has been positioned underneath the skin. Administer the contents of the syringe quickly, to make sure it all gets in. Once the injection has been completed, remove the needle and gently massage the area if you wish. Having someone assist you will make the procedure easier. With a little practice, however, most pet owners find that they have no problems administering routine injections to their pet without assistance.