



## Research on Unsafe Syringe Practices in Pakistan

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Reuse of syringes and needles, improper syringe and needle disposal and unnecessary use of injections are all practices that are considered unsafe and dangerous. Unsafe syringe practices are so dangerous because they have the potential to spread transfusion transmissible diseases, such as HIV. This PDF contains a list of research articles exploring unsafe syringe practices in Pakistan.

### **Malpractices in Syringe Disposal by Paramedical Staff**

Riaz, Rizwana, et al. "Malpractices in Syringe Disposal by Paramedical Staff." *Rawal Med. J.* 34(2), 176-79 (2009). ([Link to Full Article](#))

#### **Abstract**

**Objectives:** To determine malpractices in syringe disposal by paramedics and to assess the awareness of this among patients.

**Methods:** This observational descriptive study was conducted in eight Teaching hospitals of Rawalpindi and Islamabad for a period of 3 months in 2006. The hospitals included were Holy Family Hospital (HFH), Rawalpindi General Hospital (RGH), District Head Quarters Hospital (DHQ), Cantonment General Hospital (CGH), Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS), NASCOM hospital, Shifa International Hospital and Valley hospital. A total of 320 patients coming to emergency units of above hospitals were included in the study by quota convenient sampling (40 patients per hospital). Twenty paramedics of study hospitals were interviewed for assessment of awareness among them about syringe disposal practices using structured questionnaire.

**Results:** Sterile syringes used for 92.5% cases in DHQ hospital while in 7.5% cases syringes were reused and all the syringes were discarded without cutting the needles. In RGH, seal of the syringes was opened in 95% cases while in 5% they were reusing the syringes and 50% were disposed off without cutting their needles. In HFH, syringes were used in the same manner as in RGH and 50% disposed off by cutting the needles. In PIMS, sterile syringes were used in 97.5% cases while 60% were thrown off by cutting the needles. In CGH, Shifa International Hospital and Valley Hospital, sterile syringes were used for 100% cases and 100% disposed off by cutting the needles. In NASCOM

hospital, although 100% sterile syringes were used but none of them was disposed off without cutting the needles. Fifty percent paramedics were trained while 30% and 20% were under trained and untrained, respectively. 70% claimed to be supervised for syringe disposal and among these, 60% were supervised by staff nurse while 20% by medical superintendent of the hospital. 55% paramedics were fully aware while 20% were totally unaware of standardized syringe disposal practices. On the other hand, only 20% patients were well aware while 45% were not aware of syringe disposal practices. **Conclusion:** Although most of the paramedics were well aware of the hazards associated with improper syringe disposal and their reuse, still improper disposal was practiced at many public hospitals. There was little awareness of proper syringe disposal among patients.

## **Determinants of Therapeutic Injection Overuse among Communities in Sindh, Pakistan**

Altaf, Arshad, et al. "Determinants of Therapeutic Injection overuse among Communities in Sindh, Pakistan." *J. Ayub Med. Coll.* 16(3), 35-38 (2004). ([Link to Full Article](#))

### **Abstract**

**Background:** Unsafe injections including reuse of disposable syringe is very common in developing countries including Pakistan. Healthcare providers unnecessarily prescribe injections to patients suggesting that patients ask for injections. We conducted this qualitative study to determine the reasons of overuse of therapeutic injections by the communities in Sindh province of Pakistan.

**Methods:** Using field-tested focus group guides of World Health Organization, eighteen focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with community members of rural Sindh, pen-urban and urban Karachi during January- February 2001.

**Results:** Injections are overused in Sindh, Pakistan, because patients prefer them, believing that they provide quick relief, and perceive them as a therapeutic norm and standard practice. According to community members initiative of prescription of injections are taken by doctors. Overuse of injections is of particular concern as patients are not aware of the risks associated with reuse of injection equipment. Doctors and television are considered as the most credible source of providing healthcare information.

**Conclusion:** There is a need to educate communities regarding rationale use of therapeutic injections. Open discussion and frequent communication between doctors and patient should be encouraged. Mass media could play a vital role in educating communities about risks of unsafe injections.