By using these tips for safe handling and disposal of sharp objects used for health care at home you can prevent injuries and infections, and reduce environmental pollution.

**Types of sharp objects**
Items that require special handling and disposal include:
- Needles
- Syringes
- Lancets
- Insulin Pens and Epi Pens

**The sharps container provided by your health care team is recommended. If unavailable, you can use:**
- Thick bleach or laundry detergent bottles
- Hard plastic or metal containers with screw-on caps or tightly secured lids

**Do not use:**
- Glass or clear plastic containers
- Containers that will be recycled or returned to a store
- Toilet or trash (This could cause injury to people working with waste disposal)

**Other precautions**
- Do not recap needles after they have been used.
- Keep containers with sharp objects out of the reach of children and pets. Do not recycle containers.

**Disposal of sharp objects**
- When your container is three-quarters full, take it for proper disposal.
- If you live near the NIH, return the container to the NIH Clinical Center.
- Sharps containers cannot go through security screenings in airports or train stations. Call your local hospital or doctor’s office to see if you can return the filled container to them for disposal.
- If you cannot return the sharps container to your hospital or doctor’s office, call your local trash disposal company for directions on how to dispose of the container.
- For more information, contact your local Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or the Coalition for Safe Community Needle Disposal (safeneedledisposal.org) for your state’s sharps disposal instructions.
This information is prepared specifically for persons taking part in clinical research at the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center and may not apply to patients elsewhere. If you have questions about the information presented here, talk to a member of your health care team. Products/resources named serve as examples and do not imply endorsement by NIH. The fact that a certain product/resource is not named does not imply that such product/resource is unsatisfactory.

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