

## ***If you miss your shot:***

Soak the spot in warm water or put a heating pad on it for a while. Heat helps the circulation, so the shot won't get totally wasted. And good circulation will help prevent an abscess.

Also, don't put oils or creams on the spot until the wound has started to close. Wait a couple hours. Putting creams on too soon can cause infections and scarring (even if the cream is supposed to *prevent* scarring)!

## **REALITY CHECK!**

### **Talk is CHEAP!**

- ◆ Everyone's body is different.
- ◆ You can't always find a vein when you want one.
- ◆ Women's veins can be harder to hit
- ◆ *Sometimes* it's more important to get off fast
- ◆ Sometimes you're in a hurry because you're someplace risky

But if you managed to get the drugs and the needle, then you know how to think on your feet. Get your technique down! Don't chew up your veins!



This flyer is brought to you by your friends at  
HARM REDUCTION COALITION  
NY: 212/213-6376  
CA: 510-444-6969  
[www.harmreduction.org](http://www.harmreduction.org)

**EVERYONE is entitled to take care of themselves, whether they use drugs or not. Learning to take care of yourself takes time and thought. Talk to your friends, find out what they know**

# ***The Right Hit***

### ***Good Needle Insertion:***

- ◆ ***Saves Your Veins***
- ◆ ***Saves Your Shot***
- ◆ ***Prevents trackmarks and bruises AND***
- ◆ ***Prevents abscesses!***

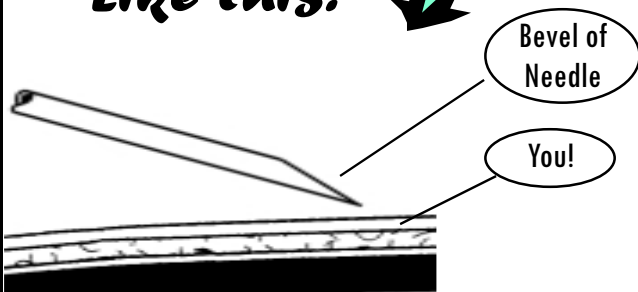


## Get to know your needle!

The tip of the needle is slanted. It's called the "bevel".  
When you want to hit a vein, the best shot is with the bevel facing **UP**.



Like this!



## Check out the angle!

The shaft of the needle lays close to the skin. This is the best angle to get a vein!

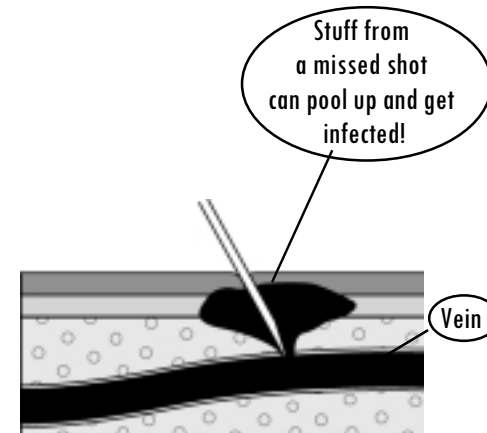
The more straight down you point the needle, the more chance the needle will go straight **through** your vein. That's bad for you arm, wastes your time AND your shot.

Insert the needle at a *gentle* angle. It's *gentle* on your veins.

# Abscesses...

## Here's how it happens

When you miss the vein, you lose the shot. But that's not the only problem. A missed shot can get infected and cause an abscess. This can happen when your vein leaks, too. Getting the shot right saves a lot more than just drugs!



This is especially true with speed and coke. By itself, heroin won't give you an abscess if you miss a shot, but the **CUT** in the dope might! Especially the cut in tar heroin. If you shoot tar, take extra care to get the shot in a good vein!

The fact is, getting a good shot is a skill. You learn by doing. A lot of the time, you can't see your veins, and you go by the feel of it.

Go in **SLOW!** Injecting into a vein is difficult, risky, and there's **NO POINT** in doing it if you don't get it right.

Tying off can really help. But once you find a vein, take the tie off. Shooting into a vein with a tie on can make the vein collapse!

Give your spot a rest after you use it. Give it a chance to heal. Hitting in the same spot over and over will blow the vein for sure.

Too far too fast!  
Needle goes right through the vein!



Not in far enough! Shot leaks, causing abscesses and bruising.



Bevel is up against the side of your vein!  
You won't get a register.



Try pulling the needle back just a little.

