

Patient Guide: Using a Vial Spike for Hormone Injections



A Needle-Free Alternative to Drawing Medication from Your Vial

What is a Vial Spike?

A **vial spike** is a small device that stays attached to the top of your medication vial. Instead of puncturing the rubber stopper with a new 18-gauge drawing needle every week, you simply connect your syringe to the spike to withdraw your medication. A vial spike can eliminate the need for the drawing needle altogether.

This can make weekly injections:

- Easier
 - No need to use an 18G drawing needle each week
 - Faster
 - Helps protect the vial's rubber stopper from repeated punctures
 - More convenient
 - Can reduce the number of supplies you need which lowers cost
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Supplies You'll Need

- Hormone medication vial
 - Vial Spike (www.medicaleshop.com has several options and you can buy them individually instead of in bulk)
 - 1 mL syringe
 - Injection needle prescribed by your provider (for example, 23 gauge x 1" inch)
 - Alcohol prep pads
 - Sharps container
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Installing the Vial Spike

This only needs to be done **ONCE** for each new vial.

1. Remove the plastic cap from the medication vial.
2. Clean the rubber stopper with an alcohol pad.
3. Remove the vial spike from its sterile packaging.
4. Press the spike firmly straight down
5. Leave the spike attached for the life of the vial.

Do not attempt to remove the spike!! It will destroy your medication vial!

Drawing Your Medication

1. Clean the vial spike with an alcohol pad.
 2. Attach your syringe to the vial spike by pushing or twisting it on.
 3. Turn the vial upside down.
 4. Slowly pull back the plunger until you reach your prescribed dose.
 5. As medication is removed over time, a small vacuum may develop inside the vial, making the plunger harder to pull. If this happens, withdraw a small amount of air through the syringe to equalize the pressure. Do not inject air into the vial.
 6. Disconnect the syringe.
 7. Attach your injection needle.
 8. Administer your injection as instructed by your healthcare provider.
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After Your Injection

- Dispose of the injection needle in a sharps container.
 - Clean the vial spike access point with an alcohol pad before storing. There are caps that can be purchased that can go on the vial spike if you need to travel with it or do not have a consistently safe and clean space to store your medication.
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Important Safety Tips

- Only use the vial spike with the medication vial it was originally attached to.
 - Never share medication, syringes, needles, or vial spikes.
 - Replace the spike when you start a new medication vial.
 - If the spike becomes loose, cracked, contaminated, or damaged, replace it.
 - Always follow your healthcare provider's injection instructions.
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Frequently Asked Questions

- 1) **Can I still use my usual injection needle?**
 - **Yes.** The vial spike only replaces the large drawing needle. You'll still use your prescribed injection needle for the actual injection.
- 2) **Do I need a new vial spike every week?**
 - **No.** One vial spike is typically used for one medication vial and stays attached until the vial is empty or discarded.
- 3) **Will this change my medication dose?**
 - **No.** You draw the same prescribed amount of medication.