

Intramuscular (IM) Injections



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Intramuscular injections can be given in three locations, the neck, the pectoral muscles, or the rump beside the tail. Please do not give injections on top of the rump, as this area will not drain if it abscesses.



Neck

Inject below the nuchal ligament, above the spine, and in front of the shoulder.



Rump

Feel for the hard bone of the Tuber Ishii and inject in the muscles below it.



Pectoral Muscles

Inject in either one of the round pectoral muscles but not between them.

- 1) Brush off any dirt and debris from the injection site.
- 2) Detach the needle from the syringe and remove the needle cover. Take care only to touch the needle hub and not the shaft of the needle itself.
- 3) Just before you insert the needle, firmly tap the area near the insertion site with your hand to reduce the chance that the horse will react to needle insertion.
- 4) Gripping the needle hub, quickly insert the needle into the muscle up to the hub. Remember, rapid needle insertion is less painful than slow insertion.
- 5) If blood appears at the needle hub, withdraw the needle half way, angle it in a different direction, and reinsert it to the hub of the needle.
- 6) Attach the syringe to the needle and gently withdraw the plunger a short distance.
 - a. If any blood is withdrawn into the syringe, the tip of the needle is probably in a vessel. If this happens, partially withdraw the needle and angle it slightly before reinserting it. You need not remove the needle completely from the skin when redirecting it. Again gently withdraw the syringe plunger to check for blood.
- 7) If there is no blood at the needle hub, inject the medication slowly.
- 8) When injecting large volumes (over 20ml), it is preferable to spread the medication into a few injection sites. To do this, inject half of the medication. Rather than removing the needle completely from the skin, partially withdraw and redirect the needle and give the rest of the medication. Remember to check for blood at each site to avoid putting medication into a vessel.