

TIP SHEET

APRIL 2007

Retractable syringe use - information for clinicians

Needle/syringe

- The VanishPoint® syringe incorporates automatic retraction of the needle into the barrel of the syringe, after the plunger is fully depressed
- Retractable syringes are not recommended for aspiration of body fluids or blood collection
- The VanishPoint® needle is pre-attached:
 - Drawing up and administration of medication occurs with the same needle
 - Drawing up will be slightly slower due to the smaller lumen of the needle
 - The needle tip can be damaged by excess force against a hard surface eg glass
 - Invert glass ampoules when drawing up medication. Normal use will not damage the tip
- The needle is activated/retracted by the plunger being advanced to the end of the barrel of the syringe
- Care **MUST** be taken when drawing back on the plunger as the plunger may dislodge more readily than conventional syringes
- Administer the injection in a continuous manner. Very slow administration will result in a perceived increase in force required to retract the needle
- In order to give the complete dose of medication the needle needs to be activated/retracted

Patient Care

- The retractable syringe **MUST** be activated whilst still in the patient. “Inpatient” needle retraction ensures administration of the complete dose of medication, as well as reduction of the risk of needle-stick injury (NSI)
- Warn patients that:
 - There is an audible click as the needle retracts, indicating that injection procedure is over
 - That the needle is retractable (i.e. it will not be visible on the end of the syringe after the injection). Reassure patients that the needle has not been left in their body
- Prevent retraction/ pinching of the patient’s skin into the syringe barrel on completion of procedure by ensuring the needle hub is not directly placed against the skin when administering the injection
- There is no evidence that there is any increase in patient discomfort when using a retractable syringe as the needle is more rapid than manual removal of a needle

Disposal

- Where the complete dose of a medication is not required (i.e. administration of local anaesthetic) it is still important to retract the needle after use to avoid NSI (dispose of the remaining medication safely)
- Dispose of used retractable syringes in a sharps container