

Lilly's Position on Sharps Disposal

Eli Lilly and Company supports the proper disposal of syringes, needles, and other sharps generated in a home setting to mitigate potential public health risks. Lilly produces medicines that may be injected by patients using a syringe and needle or a pen-type injection device.

Disposal Instructions for Consumers

Injection Devices: Disposable pen-type injection devices should be thrown away without the needle attached. Once the needle is removed, pen devices can be safely disposed of in household trash. These devices should not be recycled.

Vials and Cartridges: Empty insulin vials and cartridges can be disposed of in household trash. Do not recycle these items.

Sharps: Consumers should store used syringes and pen needles in an approved sharps container. Keep sharps containers out of the reach of children. Full containers should be disposed of in compliance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations.¹

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provides information on sharps disposal and outlines the following existing programs for patients:²

- **Drop off collection sites:** Consumers with home generated sharps can drop off sharps to disposal sites, including doctors' offices, hospitals, health clinics, pharmacies, police and fire stations, and medical waste facilities that offer this service.
- **Mail-back programs:** Many sharps manufacturers also manufacture sharps containers approved to be sent through the mail by the U.S. Postal Service. States have considered programs where consumers may contact sharps manufacturers to obtain containers for safe disposal. For a list of companies offering approved mail-back sharps products click [here](#) for California and [here](#) for Minnesota.
- **At-home needle destruction devices:** Many manufacturers sell devices that will sever, burn, or melt the needle, rendering it safe for disposal. For more information, check with your pharmacist or health care provider.
- **Household trash service:** As a last resort, consumers in certain states may dispose of home-generated sharps in rigid containers like empty laundry detergent bottles or coffee cans with lids, mark the container 'not recyclable' and dispose of in household garbage.

If you have any questions about how to dispose of your injection device or needles, please call 1-800-LillyRx (1-800-545-5979).

Compliance with State Laws and Regulations

Some states prohibit patients from disposing home-generated sharps in household waste. To ensure proper disposal of sharps and compliance with local laws, consumers should review the rules and regulations in their state. For information on specific states, visit <http://www.epa.gov/wastes/wyl/stateprograms.htm>.

California and Minnesota Plans

Based on feedback from patients and healthcare providers, Lilly believes that the greatest opportunity to improve sharps disposal practices is through education efforts. In support of this, Lilly is taking numerous steps to communicate proper sharps disposal techniques to patients and several examples are provided below.

1) Lilly is revising many of its product user manuals as well as website content to provide more explicit instructions. These new materials will:

- Clearly state that all medical sharps, including syringes and pen needles, need to be collected in an approved sharps container.
- Clearly state that sharps containers must be disposed of according to local regulations.
- Clearly state that pen devices, vials, and cartridges cannot be recycled.
- Direct patients to information on local disposal guidelines.

2) Lilly will be adding content on sharps collection and disposal to its diabetes patient education programs and hospital in-service activities. These events will discuss safe use of approved-sharps containers, and will provide patients with information on local disposal guidelines.

3) Lilly will be educating representatives in its retail and hospital sales forces in order to better address sharps-related questions from healthcare providers.

4) Lilly will begin providing more explicit instructions for device and needle disposal to patients calling The Lilly Answer Center (TLAC), its medical information hotline.

Lilly does not collect and dispose of syringes and pen needles used in the home setting.

References

1) U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Community Options for Safe Needle Disposal*. Accessible at:
<http://www.epa.gov/wastes/nonhaz/industrial/medical/med-govt.pdf>

2) U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Disposal of Medical Sharps*. Accessible at:
<http://www.epa.gov/wastes/nonhaz/industrial/medical/disposal.htm>