

COVID-19 Vaccination: Building Global Capacity

Q&A for Session 04: Infection prevention and control for COVID-19 vaccine introduction

Tuesday, March 02, 2021

Thank you for attending the above session for Health workers. Many questions were submitted by participants, either in the Zoom chat during the session itself, or in the two Telegram channels managed by Technet-21 supporting regions, countries, and partners in preparing for COVID-19 vaccine introduction. In this document, we share the answers from presenters to each question.

Links to the session recordings in all languages and presentations can be found on the [Project ECHO website](#).

More information on COVID-19 vaccine introduction can be found in the resources listed below.

- [General questions regarding the COVID-19 vaccines](#)
- [Preparing for COVID-19 vaccination](#)
- [Covid-19 Vaccines introduction toolkit](#)
- [WHO Coronavirus disease \(COVID-2019\) technical guidance](#)
- [TechNet-21 – The Technical Network for Strengthening Immunization Services](#)

COVID-19 vaccine trainings:

- [COVID-19 vaccination training for health workers](#) (OpenWHO)
- [Infection Prevention and Control \(IPC\) for COVID-19 Virus](#) (OpenWHO)
- [Misinformation management guide](#)

In addition, TechNet-21 manages two Telegram channels supporting regions, countries, and partners in preparing for COVID-19 vaccine introduction. In these two spaces - one anglophone and one francophone - you will be able to share your experiences, discuss key questions, and connect with experts from around the world. We'll also share new information and global guidance as it becomes available. Join us today:

- [COVID-19 Vaccine Introduction – TechNet-21 \(English\)](#)
- [Introduction des vaccins contre la Covid-19 – TechNet-21 \(Français\)](#)

Should we change the needle before we administer the vaccine to recipient? Because according to Pfizer, we can use the same needle (syringe out the vaccine and administer the vaccine to recipient). Is there any risk of infection if we don't change the needle?

The reuse of syringes and needles carries a high risk of transmitting infections due person-to-person transmission of bloodborne pathogens (such as HepB or HIV). For this reason, needles should never be reused. A new sterile needle and syringe should be used for each new patient and injection.

Please refer to **Immunization in Practice**.

https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/193412/9789241549097_eng.pdf

The use of the auto disable syringe and needle does not allow for change of the needle after going through the stopper of the vial. Can you comment on this please?

Auto-disable (AD) syringes have a self-locking mechanism that allows only one-time use. AD syringes are recommended for immunization because they can only be used once and can reduce disease transmission from contaminated equipment, and also because they are disposable. This is called a reuse prevention feature. AD syringes have different types of locking mechanisms that are triggered at different times. Some syringes lock their plunger at the start of the injection while others do so at the end. AD syringes that lock at the start are preferred since they completely prevent reuse. Some AD syringes are retractable, meaning that the needle can be pulled in the barrel. This mechanism adds stick injury protection (SIP) to reduce the risk of needle-stick injuries

Please refer to:

Safety of injection: WHO-UNICEF-UNFPA joint statement on the use of auto-disable syringes in immunization services, 2nd rev

<https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/63650>

WHO guideline on the use of safety-engineered syringes for intramuscular, intradermal and subcutaneous injections in health care settings (EN, FR)

https://www.who.int/infection-prevention/publications/is_guidelines/en/

Like COVAX support, can we expect donor support to improve IPC measures & facilities such as incinerators in developing countries? As the existing system might not be enough and governments are already overburdened with vaccine cost and other logistics.

Countries are encouraged to reach out to donors and partners in their Interagency Coordinating Committees to identify potential support that can be offered at the local level. At this time, COVAX Facility does not support operational support costs.