

# HOME TREATMENT

- Apply a heat source to help it drain & heal faster- such as a clean warm cloth
- Keep it clean
- **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CUT THE ABSCESS**
- Let it drain naturally & don't squeeze it

# WHEN TO SEEK HELP

If you have a fever, or the abscess has red streaking around it, over 2 cm in size,  
**OR** if it just won't heal

**YOUR ABSCESS MAY NEED TO BE CUT & DRAINED IN A STERILE ENVIRONMENT**

**YOU ALSO MAY NEED ANTIBIOTICS SO THE INFECTION DOESN'T GO INTO YOUR BLOODSTREAM TURNING INTO SEPSIS**



# REFERENCES & RESOURCES

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Sterifilt (2020). Sterifilt Needles for Injection. [Google Images]. [www.totalaccessgroup.com/assets/images/hr-s-t-filt\\_sterifilt.jpg](http://www.totalaccessgroup.com/assets/images/hr-s-t-filt_sterifilt.jpg)

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# ABSCESS

## WHAT IS AN ABSCESS? WHAT TO DO IF YOU DEVELOP AN ABSCESS & HOW TO CARE FOR IT



**AN ABSCESS CAN BE A HIGH RISK COMPLICATION OF INTRAVENOUS DRUG USE**

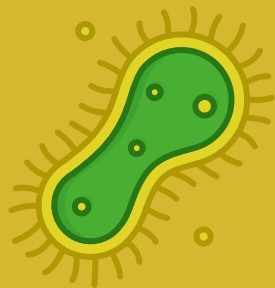
**TREAT EARLY TO AVOID COMPLICATIONS**

**SEEKING HELP AND EXPOSING AN INJECTION SITE CAN BE A VULNERABLE THING. BRING SOMEONE YOU TRUST**



# WHAT IS AN ABSCESS?

- An abscess is an infection under the skin
- Caused from a virus, bacteria, or parasite (from unsanitary water or cottons)

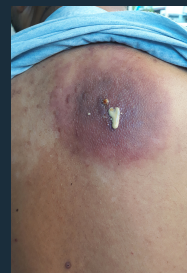


# WHAT CAUSES AN ABSCESS?

- Sharing or reusing needles and supplies
- Missing your vein when injecting
- Using too much unsterile acidifier
- Not cleaning the site before injecting
- Skin popping & Muscle popping

# WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- Hot to touch
- Redness
- Pus
- Fever
- Streaking
- Swelling
- Can show up anywhere on the body, but most likely at injection site



# HOW TO PREVENT GETTING AN ABSCESS?

- Cleanse your hands with soap and water or sanitizer
- Cleanse the injection site with an alcohol swab
- Always use new supplies
- Avoid licking your needle



# COMPLICATIONS OF AN ABSCESS

**SEPSIS:** A blood infection that is characterized by fever or chills, sweating, tiredness, racing heart, difficulty breathing

**PRO TIP:**  
DRAW A CIRCLE AROUND  
YOUR ABSCESS TO  
MONITOR ITS SIZE



For more information on the use of SteriFilt's please see: BCCDC  
SteriFilt Link on ([towardtheheart.com](http://towardtheheart.com))

## DID YOU KNOW?

**SKIN POPPING (INJECTING IN THE LAYER BETWEEN YOUR SKIN & FAT) & MUSCLE POPPING (PUTTING THE NEEDLE STRAIGHT DOWN & DEEP INTO THE MUSCLE) PUTS YOU AT A GREAT RISK FOR DEVELOPING AN ABSCESS**

**IF YOU MUST POP: MAKE SURE TO FILTER YOUR DRUGS USING A STERI-FILT OR CLEAN COTTON**