

## LET'S GET OUR PRIORITIES STRAIGHT!

Four big factors will shape where you stick that Needle!

**1** WHERE you are getting off: if you are someplace comfortable where you can take your time vs. someplace you have to be sneaky and finish fast

**2** WHAT you are using: if you're on a big coke run, you are gonna use your hit spots more than if you are getting your dope fix.

**3** WHO: Are you getting off by yourself? This means you're gonna hit yourself someplace you can reach. Maybe you never hit yourself, which means the other person needs to know what they're doing.

**4** FRUSTRATION: You want to get off, and if you get really frustrated, it can make you impulsive! The truth is, sometimes you are gonna be sick, and you want to be well **FAST**. Factor this in when you make your plans!

**These things will all affect how you pick your spot. But each spot has its risks, and you need to think about those too!**

**SUPER IMPORTANT!** If you feel a pulse, that's an **ARTERY !!** Never hit an artery! Its really dangerous.

The farther away from your heart, the weaker the circulation. Veins in the hands and feet heal more slowly, so its easier to totally blow them if you use them a lot.

Arms: **lowest** risk, best choice. Duh! Upper arm is better than lower. Why? It's closer to the heart. Taking good care of your arm veins pays off: you don't have to get off in harder, riskier places.

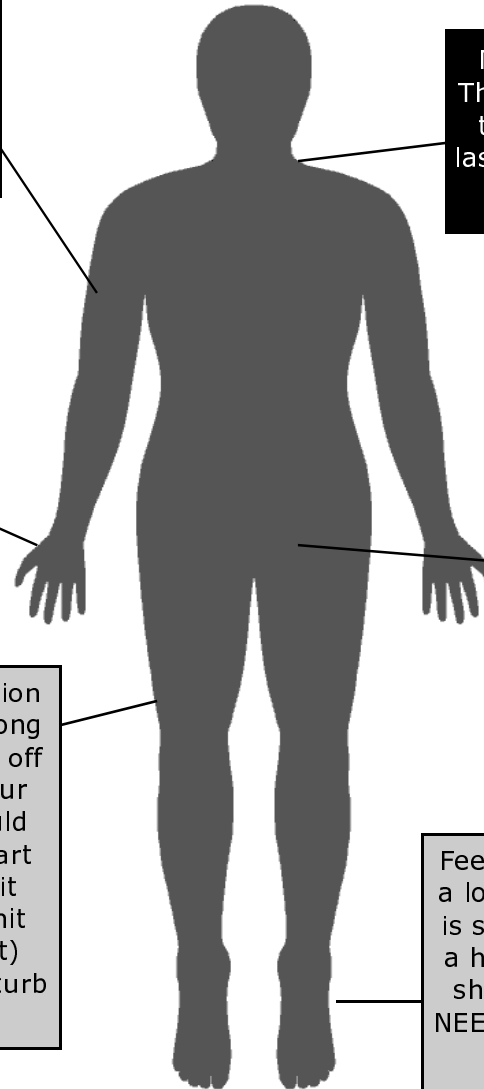
Hands: relative **low** risk. Lots of rollers here, it can be harder than you think to get a good shot! If you scar or track here, you can't hide it. If you blow veins here, your hands can stay swollen. Use the narrowest needle you can get here! Let your spot heal between

Legs: **Medium** risk. Why? Circulation problems. Blood in your legs is a long way from your heart. Plus, getting off in your legs is more likely than your arms to leave blood clots than could break off and get stuck in your heart or lungs. Bad. Every time you hit near where you hit on your legs, hit "downstream" (closer to the heart) from the last spot, so you don't disturb a spot that is healing!

Neck: **HIGH RISK!** Why? The **carotid artery** is here. Hit this and you could die. Total last resort! Only for the die-hard and very experienced!

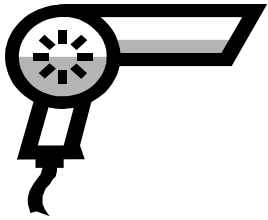
Groin: **HIGH RISK!** Why? The **femoral vein** is big, and fairly easy to find. But its really close to the **femoral nerve and artery**. Be sure to avoid the artery by checking for a pulse. If you feel it, don't hit there! Move a short distance toward the inside of your leg to find the vein. You may not see it. Don't try to hit here unless you really know how to hit "blind".

Feet: **Medium** risk. Veins here take a long time to heal. Circulation here is super slow. Plus, its hard to keep a healing spot clean when you were shoes and socks. Remember: you **NEED** your feet. Lose these and your screwed!!



# FIND THAT VEIN!

- Tying off really helps! But take the tie off after the needle is in and before you shoot, or the pressure in your vein could ruin it.
- Gravity helps! Just standing up and letting your arms hang can bring veins out!
- Swinging your arms and making fists helps, too.



*HEAT* brings veins to the surface:

- Getting off someplace warm will make finding a vein easier.
- Wearing a sweater or a coat while you prepare the shot can help. Don't take it off until you've got the shot cooked up!
- Wrapping your arm in cellophane or Saran Wrap can heat you up and bring veins to the surface.
- Using a blow drier or a hand drier can bring veins up.



This flyer is brought to you by your friends at  
**HARM REDUCTION COALITION**  
NY: 212/213-6376  
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**EVERYONE** is entitled to take care of themselves, whether they use drugs or not. Learning to take care of yourself takes time and thought. Talk to your friends, find out what they know

# LEVELS

# OF

# RISK

OK

Maybe

Careful!

Extreme Caution!!!

**PICKING A SPOT TO  
HIT: KNOW THE  
RISKS!**