



- Get yourself a sterile kit and use it! You have to realize that not every pharmacy sells big syringes (5cc, 10cc, 20cc)! You can get them at the Fixpunkt buses and contact stores. Be sure to keep a stock of sterile big syringes.
- If possible, try to get originally-packed, non-watered down Polamidone instead of Methadone from your doctor. These vials always contain a sterile solution, so it reduces a lot of risks for your health.
- Try to talk to your prescribing doctor or your personal counselor (PSB). If there's no PSB available, visit one of the city's Drug Advice Centers!

**GET FURTHER INFORMATION AND ADVICE AT THE FIXPUNKT-BUSES AND CONTACT STORES:**

**For instance at the Health-Care Bus ("Gesundheitsmobil")**

Check locations and opening times at <http://www.fixpunkt-berlin.de/index.php?id=zeiten>

**Further information and contact:**

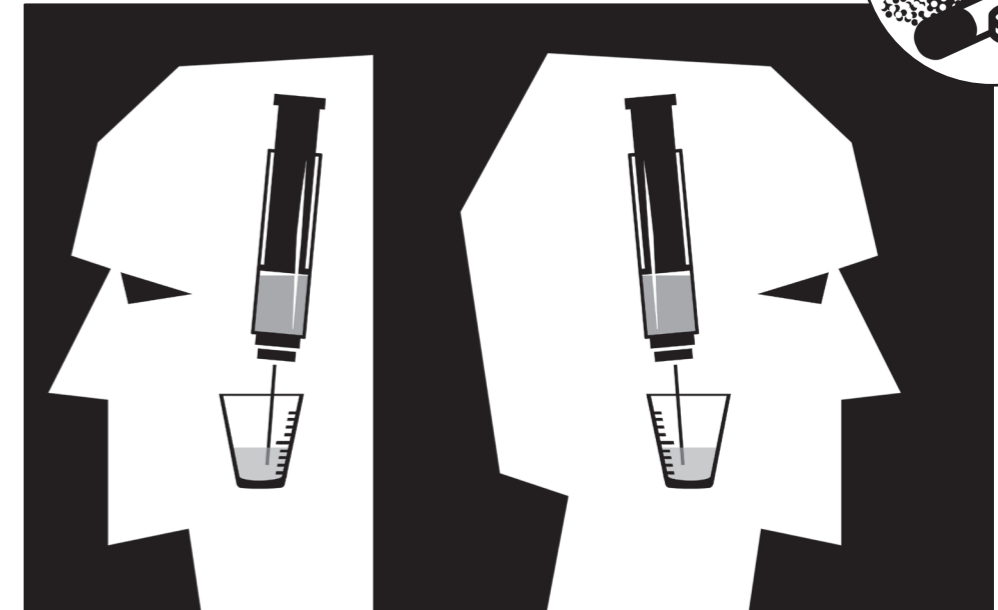
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Last update: May 2013

**Fixpunkt**

Reichenberger Str. 131  
10999 Berlin

## Injecting Methadone...



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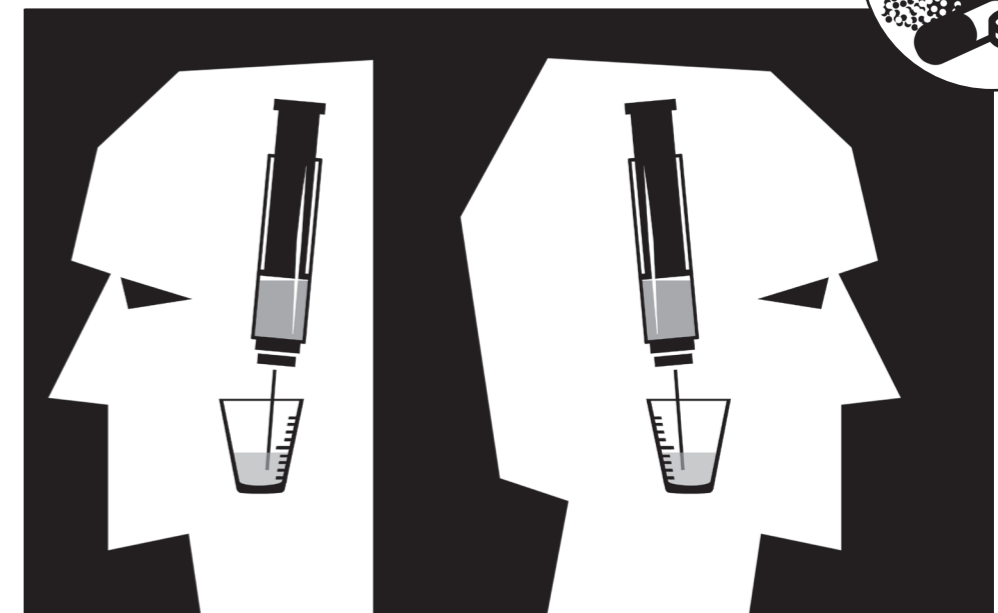
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## Injecting Methadone...



“If something can go wrong, it will...” as the saying goes amongst workers in Drug addiction Relief organisations for years... especially on the topic of i.v. use of Methadone and Polamidone. Why is it that you shouldn't use methadone that way?

1. Distribution of i.v.-compatible drug-substitution substances is prohibited by the German Controlled Substances Laws (BtmVV).
2. Drug substitution's aim is to gradually break away from a drug-related life; using syringes, which is a strong symbol while using drugs, stands in the way of achieving this goal.

We have to consider that there are lots of users who are either not willing to or just can't stop using syringes – either instantly, temporarily or in any other way...

In other words, there are numerous users on Methadone that are still obsessed with syringes and injecting themselves. This leads them to:

- Carry on purchasing heroin, cocaine or additional Methadone on the black market
- not swallow their prescribed methadone dose, instead spitting it into small containers to inject themselves later...
- ask their prescribing doctor to give them Polamidone instead – because it's supposed to be less dangerous when used intravenously...

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- ask their prescribing doctor to give them Polamidone instead – because it's supposed to be less dangerous when used intravenously...

- refrain from seeking medical attention from their prescribing doctor in case of abscesses due to injecting Methadone...

#### RISKS OF I.V. USE OF METHADONE

There is no scientific information on the effects of injecting methadone. Nevertheless, we have noticed some immediate consequences of it in our work:

##### Severe contamination

The Methadone you get at your pharmacy or your prescribing doctor is not a sterile (germ-free) solution at all; it's been produced like any other syrup to take orally... Spitting your Methadone dose in a small container contaminates the substance even more! This can lead to severe shakes, abscesses or even inflammation of the heart muscle (endocarditis).

##### Contamination with different viruses

In addition to this bacterial contamination by using “spit-out” methadone, you could get infected with viruses like HIV or, even more likely, with the Hepatitis virus by using methadone intravenously.

Using the kit (syringe and needle) of other users even just to measure out a dose to inject it yourself might have these dangerous effects.

##### The methadone syrup is sugar-based

If you inject sugar-based syrup in small veins it destroys the valves in them! This leads to a high risk

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of getting abscesses, necroses(destroying these veins) and thrombosis. If these little valves are destroyed, water will gather in the affected limbs (arms, legs); this is known as oedema.

#### OUR ADVICE?

##### Try finding ways of reducing or even quit the habit of using syringes.

Most important is to think about the reasons why you are still injecting? Are there any ways to reduce risks for yourself; if so, try them and see if they work for you! And: TALK ABOUT it with other users, talk about your experiences! And of course it is necessary for you to have a Methadone-doctor and/or a personal counselor (PSB) that you can speak to openly.

To stop the habit of injecting yourself, in our experience it might be easier if you try to keep away from the scene as you try to change your lifestyle in a positive way.

#### SAFER-USE ADVICE:

If you can't stop the craving for syringes or are unable to deal with it:

- Try injecting sterile saline solution (salt water made from one part salt and 100 parts water); plastic vials available at the Fixpunkt buses and at the Fixpunkt vending machines!

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