NEEDLE RELATED FAINTING:

Why does it happen? What to do about it?

WHY DOES SOMEONE FAINT?

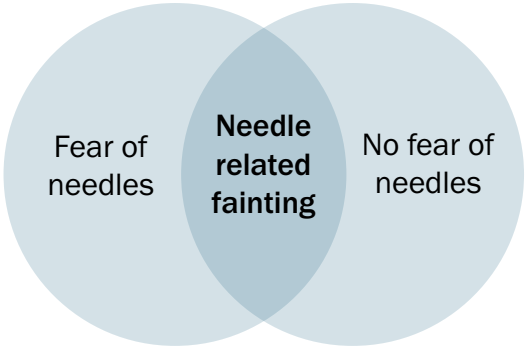
Fainting is caused by a sudden drop in blood pressure. This occurs when the brain (your control centre) does not receive enough fuel (oxygen), and you lose control and awareness for a short period of time. This drop in blood pressure is called the **vasovagal response.**

Vasovagal syncope:
An overreaction to a trigger (like a needle or blood). It is one of the most common causes of fainting.

WARNING SIGNS

- **Headaches**
- **Sweating**
- **Weakness**
- **Light headedness (dizziness)**
- **Pins and needles**
- **Changes in vision**
- **Nausea**

DOES FAINTING MEAN SOMEONE IS AFRAID OF NEEDLES?



Fainting is more common in those with needle fear.

But not everyone who faints due to needles is afraid of them. And not everyone who is afraid of needles will faint.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SOMEONE GETS A NEEDLE?

1. Needle is presented
2. Blood pressure and heart rate **increase**
3. Blood pressure and heart rate **decrease**
4. Feelings of faintness and dizziness

MUSCLE TENSION:

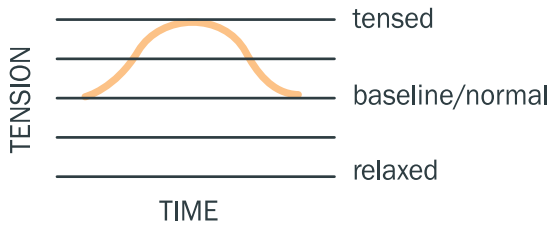
A way to help stop fainting during needles

WHAT IS MUSCLE TENSION?

Muscle tension is an exercise that involves alternating between tensing and releasing muscles in the body (e.g., legs, stomach).

Muscle tension increases someone's blood pressure before and during the needle. When the needle is presented, their blood pressure does not drop to a low level, ***preventing fainting***.

Important: when releasing the muscle(s), don't fully relax, instead go back to baseline/normal.



Helpful tip: Lying down while getting a needle may also help prevent fainting.

WHO CAN USE THIS TECHNIQUE?

Muscle tension is ***a safe technique that children seven and older and adults can use***. Muscle tension can help anyone who gets dizzy and faints during needles.

Ask the person to follow these steps:

1. Sit in a chair.
2. Tense or squeeze the muscles in their legs and stomach. Do not tense the muscles in the arm where the needle will go.
3. Squeeze for about 10 to 15 seconds until their face feels flushed or warm.
4. Release the tension back to normal for 20 to 30 seconds.
5. Repeat steps 2, 3, and 4 until the needle is over, or until the feeling of faintness passes.

Scan for more resources