



# RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICE POLICIES TO facilitate use of a clean tourniquet for each injection



## DISTRIBUTE SUPPLIES

- Thin, pliable, easy-to-release, non-latex tourniquets with non-porous surfaces
- Offer a tourniquet with each needle provided
- Based on the quantity requested by clients with no limits

## EDUCATE

- Correct, single person use of tourniquets
- Risks of bacterial contamination and HIV and HCV associated with the reuse and sharing of tourniquets
- Risks of tissue and vein damage and impairment of blood circulation caused by improper use of tourniquets
- Replace a tourniquet when:
  - There is visible blood and/or dirt on it
  - It has ever been used by someone else
  - There is a loss of elasticity

## DISPOSE

- Dispose used tourniquets in accordance with local regulations for biomedical waste
- Offer multiple sizes of biohazard containers for safe disposal
- Offer multiple, convenient locations for safe disposal in rural and urban settings

## RISKS

- Previously used tourniquets may contain blood contaminated with HIV, HCV and/or HBV
- Transmission may occur if tourniquets contaminated with HIV, HCV and HBV are used by more than one person
- Makeshift tourniquets, such as ropes, shoelaces, wire, condoms, leather or terry cloth belts, or bandanas:
  - may cause trauma to the skin and veins (including vein rupture due to increased pressure) and may
  - cause infiltration of blood and fluids into surrounding tissues
  - are hard to clean if they become splattered with blood
- Used tourniquets may be contaminated with pathogenic bacteria and are a cross-infection risk if shared
- Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) can be transmitted via tourniquet reuse and sharing

## BEHAVIORS

- Not all people who inject drugs need to use tourniquets
- Used tourniquets are occasionally shared