

A different method is used when a medication is very irritating to the skin or may cause skin discoloration and in fact is now the recommendation for all adult IM injections. This is called the **Z-track** method (Fig. 10-15). If a health-care professional does not use the Z-track method with a medication such as Imferon, the patient may have permanent discoloration of the skin at the site. It is important to follow the directions for Z-tracking closely, or the needle may break in the skin (Procedure Box 10-10).

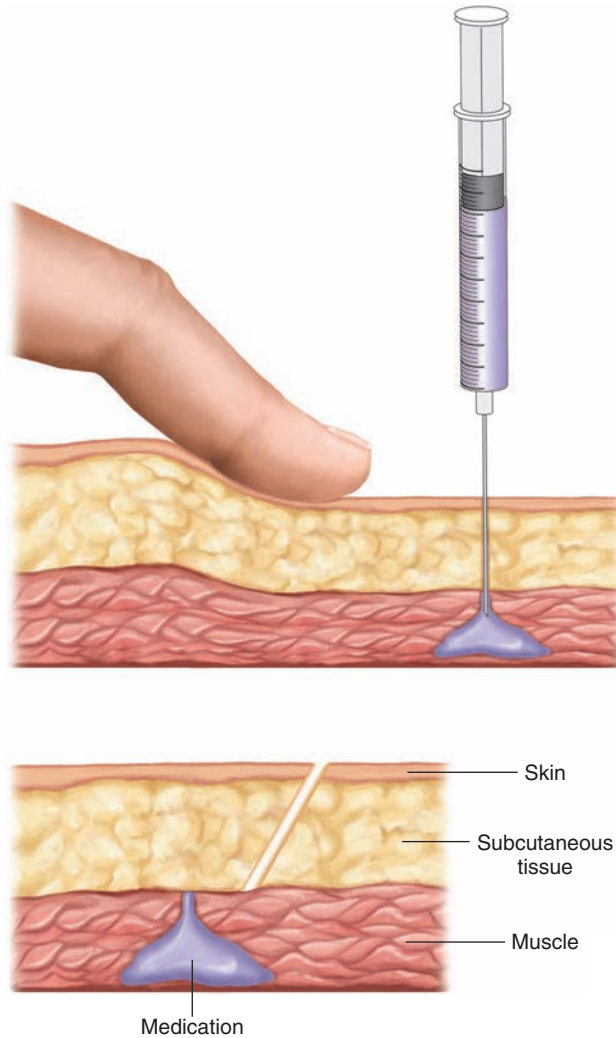


FIGURE 10-15: Z-track method. This method is used to administer medications that are caustic or will stain the skin.

Procedure Box 10-10 Z-Track Administration

Safety Precautions: Immediately dispose of sharps after administration. Use extreme care in locating landmarks for injection sites, to avoid injury to muscles, nerves, and bones.

Supplies: Medication in appropriate syringe with appropriate needle, alcohol wipe, cotton ball, adhesive bandage, gloves, order, teaching materials, sharps container

Steps:

1. Follow all steps from Procedure Box 10-9 up until actually inserting the needle.
2. Before inserting the needle, pull the skin laterally 1 inch away from the injection site (see Fig. 10-15).
3. Insert the needle at 90°, as for all IM injections.

(continued)