

## Boiling injection equipment

Source: Stover, H., Trautmann, F. (2001). *Risk reduction for drug users in prisons*. Trimbo's Institute, The Netherlands.

This is the most time-consuming procedure but the safest as well. As a hotplate is available and use is allowed in many prisons this is a realistic procedure:

**Material required:** Hotplate, a pan, water.

**Duration:** If all equipment is at hand, boiling injection equipment takes around 15 - 20 minutes.

### Procedure:

- First rinse the needle with syringe with cold water twice by pulling up water through the needle and flushing it into the gutter or the toilet.
- Detach (if possible) the needle from barrel, and pull out the plunger. Make sure no air bubbles are left. Put needle and syringe into boiling water for at least 15 minutes.
- Let the parts cool down and put them back together again.
- Before using, rinse the complete syringe again with cold water.

### Advantages:

- Required equipment is simple and harmless.
- This is the only way of cleaning which protects against most infections (HIV, hepatitis B and C but also bacteria and moulds. Whether it also kills the hepatitis C virus is yet not clear.)
- A spoon can also be disinfected by boiling it together with the syringe.

### Disadvantages:

- People think that putting the syringe in hot water for a minute is good enough. This is not true.
- In Europe most drug users inject using disposable syringes. These syringes can only be boiled between one and three times. After that, the vacuum-seal of the syringe becomes deficient.
- Some syringes will not stand being boiled for 15 to 20 minutes.

