

**Safe Science =
Good Science**

Oct 26, 2020

Sharps include:

- Needles
- Scalpels
- Lancets
- Razor blades



Good Sharps Practices

- Never recap or bend needles
- Place a sharps collection container as close as possible to the work area
- Discard used needles in the sharps container immediately after use
- Quickly begin first aid in the event of a needle stick injury

Sharps Safety

Hazards

Around 385,000 health care workers per year sustain a sharps injury. Unfortunately, it is believed that over 50% of cases go unreported.

Needlesticks and other sharps-related injuries expose personnel to bloodborne pathogens (BBP) that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans. These pathogens include:

- Hepatitis A, B, & C
- HIV
- 20+ other BBP

Although medical and biological researcher workers may be at greater risk for exposure to BBPs, **lab personnel manipulating chemicals with sharps (needle, lancet, etc.) also have an increased exposure risk to sharps injury.** If accidentally stuck with a sharp, the **chemical can be introduced into the tissues and/or bloodstream.**

Take a look at the attached PDF article! The article from *ACS Central Science* details the events when a student accidentally pricked his finger with a used needle that had previously contained dichloromethane. *(Warning: there are graphic images.)*

If a Needle Stick Occurs...

In the event of an accidental needle stick follow the below process:

- Stay calm and stop working
- Remove PPE
- Wash the wound with water and soap (*do not scrub the wound*)
- Call Campus Health Services at 502-852-6446
- Notify PI
- Seek medical assistance ASAP
- Complete report forms (*can be found on [Risk Management webpage](#)*)

Proper Disposal of Used sharps

Used sharps must be placed in a leak-proof and puncture resistant container. Full sharps containers contaminated with human blood or other animal or human biological material must be securely closed and disposed into medical waste container. Sharps containers with chemical contaminated sharps must be properly labeled as “hazardous waste” and submitted for DEHS chemical waste pick up.