**Objective:** To raise awareness of sharps hazards and safe handling practices

Improper handling or disposal of needles and other sharps, such as scalpels, broken glass, and razors, can result in serious infections, including the Hepatitis B virus (HBV), the Hepatitis C virus (HBC), and the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), which causes AIDS.

If you work around sharps, take precautions to limit your exposure.

In addition, follow **universal precautions**: treat all blood and other potentially infectious materials (OPIM) as if they are contaminated with bloodborne pathogens.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

* Wear appropriate PPE, such as face masks and gloves that are liquid- and puncture-resistant.
* Immediately replace damaged or contaminated PPE.
* Properly disinfect or dispose of used PPE and other materials exposed to blood or OPIM.
* Wash hands immediately after removing PPE.

**Handling Needles and Sharps**

* Use forceps or other devices to pick-up sharps
* Do not bend or recap needles.
* Do not shear or break sharps.
* Discard used sharps immediately in an approved sharps container.

**Medical Safety Devices**

Reduce exposure hazard by using needleless or recessed-needle systems.

* **Self-sheathing needles** are needles with sheaths, or covers, that can be slid back over the needles after use and lock into place.
* **Self-retracting** needles retract into the syringe after use.
* **Needleless systems** are devices that do not use needles for the collection and withdrawal of body fluids or for the administration of medication and fluids. Examples of needleless systems are jet injectors and Luer taper systems.
* **Single-use scalpels** have shields that slide over the blades after use.

**Sharps Containers**

* A sharps container must be:
* Readily accessible.
* Kept as close as possible to where sharps are used.
* Red or labeled with a biohazard sign.
* Leak-proof.
* Puncture-resistant.
* Closable.
* Keep the container upright to prevent any sharps or liquids from spilling.
* Regularly inspect the container, and replace it when it is two-thirds full.
* Close the container before moving or replacing. If leakage is possible, transport the sharps in a secondary container that is closable, labeled, color-coded, and leak-resistant.
* Dispose of the sharps containers as regulated waste, following local and federal requirements.
* Never open, empty, or clean containers manually.
* Never put hands into a sharps container.

**Exposure Response**

An exposure incident involves either a sharps injury or contact between blood or OPIM and a vulnerable part of the body, such as the mouth, the eyes, mucous membranes, or broken skin.

**Immediate response:**

* Wash the exposed area thoroughly with soap and running water. Use non-abrasive, antimicrobial soap.
* Flush the nose, mouth, or skin with splashes of water.
* Irrigate eyes with water or saline.
* Report the exposure immediately.
* Seek medical attention.

**Further follow-up:**

* The employer must provide an immediate, confidential medical evaluation and any needed follow-up at no cost to the exposed employee.
* The employer must obtain consent from the source individual and the exposed employee to test the blood.
* Within 15 days, the injured employee and employer will receive a written opinion of the findings.
* When medically indicated, the employer will provide risk counseling and post-exposure protective treatment.

This form documents that the training specified above was presented to the listed participants. By signing below, each participant acknowledges receiving this training.

Organization: Date:

Trainer: Trainer’s Signature:

**Class Participants:**

Name: Signature:

Name: Signature:

Name: Signature:

Name: Signature:

Name: Signature:

Name: Signature:

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