WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP PREVENT AN INJURY

Be Prepared

- Organize your work area with appropriate sharps disposal containers within reach
- Work in well-lit areas
- Receive training on how to use sharps safety devices
- Before handling sharps, assess any hazards–get help if needed

Be Aware

- Keep the exposed sharp in view
- Be aware of people around you
- Stop if you feel rushed or distracted
- Focus on your task
- Avoid hand-passing sharps and use verbal alerts when moving sharps
- Watch for sharps in linen, beds, on the floor, or in waste containers

Dispose of Sharps with Care

- Be responsible for the device you use
- Activate safety features after use
- Dispose of devices in rigid sharps containers; do not overfill containers
- Keep fingers away from the opening of sharps containers

A FACILITY'S "CULTURE OF SAFETY" IS IMPORTANT FOR SHARPS INJURY PREVENTION

FACILITIES THAT VALUE SAFETY HAVE FEWER SHARPS INJURIES.

Characteristics of such facilities include:

- Sharps injury prevention is a prominent organizational priority
- Management and staff have a shared commitment to prevent sharps injuries
- Staff members are encouraged to report sharps injuries promptly
- Individual safety accountability is promoted

For more information:
www.cdc.gov/sharpssafety

SHARPS SAFETY *for* HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

YOU MAY BE AT RISK

Every day, more than 1,000 healthcare workers in the hospital setting are injured with a needle or other sharp device.

MOST HEALTHCARE WORKERS ARE AT RISK.

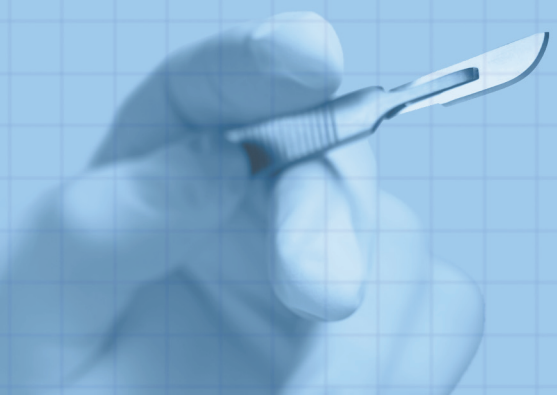
What are your chances of infection from a contaminated sharps injury?

HEPATITIS B: 1 in 5
(if you're not vaccinated)

HEPATITIS C: 1 in 50

HIV: 1 in 300

After getting first aid, report sharps injuries. Report other sharp hazards you observe. You may help prevent someone else from being injured.



SHARPS SAFETY DEVICES CAN REDUCE INJURIES

Types of sharps safety devices that can be used to protect workers:

- Needle-free IV systems
- Sheathed, blunting, or retractable needles
- Blood transfer adapters
- Non-breakable plastic vacuum and capillary tubes
- Sharps disposal containers

GET INVOLVED IN SELECTING AND EVALUATING THE DEVICES YOU USE.

Employers are required to involve frontline workers in selecting devices with safety features.

Choose devices that:

- Come attached with safety features that can not be removed
- Are easy to use with clear instructions
- Do not interfere with patient care
- Can be engaged with one hand
- Enable hands to remain behind the exposed sharp
- Are visibly different when activated

INJURIES CAN OCCUR BEFORE, DURING, OR AFTER USE OF A SHARP

Examples of High-risk situations:

During patient care:

- Inserting or withdrawing a needle
- Inserting needles into IV lines
- Handling or passing sharps

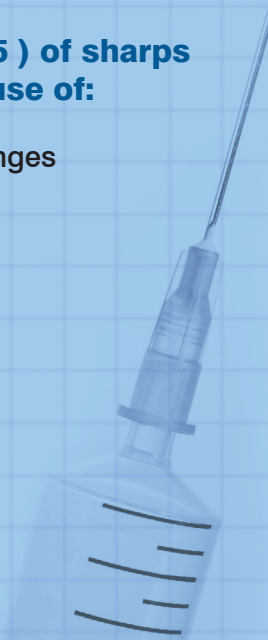
Immediately after sharp use:

- Recapping a used needle
- Transferring or processing specimens

During and after sharp disposal:

- Disposing of sharps into proper containers
- Cleaning up after a procedure
- Sharps left on floors and tables, or found in linen, beds, or waste containers

In hospitals, 80% (4 in 5) of sharps injuries are due to the use of:

- Hypodermic needles/syringes
- Suture needles
- Winged-steel (butterfly-type) needles
- Blood collection needles
- Scalpels
- IV stylets

Many other devices, including glass, also cause sharps injuries.