

Lab-Specific Sharps Safety Plan

(Nonhazardous or Chemical-contaminated sharps)

Principal Investigator:


Dept:

Phone:


Technician or Alternative Contact:

Phone:


**NEVER PUT SHARPS (OR SYRINGES) INTO THE REGULAR TRASH. EVER!
USE A SHARPS CONTAINER!**




Red = Biological Waste



Yellow = Chemotherapy Waste



Green/Clear = Chemical contaminated Sharps Waste



Uncontaminated broken glass, plastic pipets
No syringes! Even those without a needle!

See the Environmental Compliance website and [Learner's Guide](#) for disposal guide

A sharp is defined as anything that can cut, puncture, or scrape human skin. For example:

Razor blades Needles Scalpels



Per EH&S Laboratory Safety Training, when developing the Sharps Safety Plan:

1. Identify all sharps whether disposable or reusable. Don't forget sharp instruments!
Example: microtome
2. Assess Risk based on frequency of use and consequences of exposure.
3. Ensure appropriate sharps disposal.
4. Document your lab-specific plan in your lab safety binder.

Sharps used in the Lab

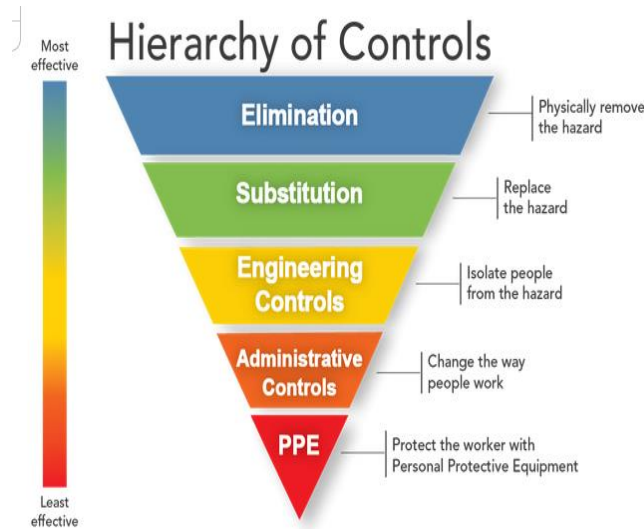
Sharp (Be specific - type, brand, gauge, length)	Safety Device? (Y/N)	Procedure	Hazardous Material(s)

If sharps safety devices are not available, how are sharps risks mitigated?

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Use OSHA's hierarchy of controls to minimize the potential of a sharps injury



Picture reference: NIOSH

First – Try to eliminate sharps:

- Eliminate sharps whenever possible.
- Reduce the number of sharps used.
- Do not re-use sharps.
- Do not leave sharps unprotected on open benches. Never leave an open blade or razor out on the bench or in drawer.

Second – Substitute for plastic or safer sharps:

- Use plastic whenever possible.
 - Plastic pipettes
 - Plastic gel extraction tools (to replace razor blades)
 - Plastic coverslips
 - Polypropylene vacuum flasks
- Replace fine tip glass Pasteur pipets with polypropylene versions ([Plasteur®](#)) or 'plastic gel-loading pipet tips' (use this search in VWR or Fisher Scientific – multiple brands available).

Third – Engineered Safety Sharps:

- Safety sharps generally have a mechanism which blunts or covers the sharp following its use and prior to disposal.
- The safety mechanism must be:
 - integral to the sharp, and
 - easily activated with one hand.
- The Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan, [Appendix 2](#) has a list of safety devices that have already been evaluated by SMH – use one of those, or contact EH&S for options.

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Fourth – Modify work practices associated with sharps (administrative controls):

- Set up work environment allowing fewest distractions.
- Focus on task and position of non-dominant hand in relation to sharps.
- Keep all of scalpels, knives, etc. pointing in the same direction if they are in a box or container. If you reach in to pick them up, you can grasp the “safe” end of the stack.
- Never pass sharps to another person hand-to-hand.
- When uncapping needles, minimize the potential for recoil that can cause an accidental needlestick.
- When safety needles or blades cannot be used (i.e. specific gauge or size is not available):
 - DO NOT remove contaminated needles or other sharps unless you use a mechanical device (like a hemostat) instead of your fingers.
 - DO NOT remove or disassemble needles from syringes or tubing, or surgical blades from their handles if possible.
 - DO NOT recap contaminated needles or other sharps while holding the cap in your non-dominant hand. If you must recap, use a one-handed technique ([video](#))
 - Place needle cap on table
 - Holding the syringe only, guide needle into cap
 - Lift up syringe so cap is sitting on needle hub.
 - Secure cap into place. Rather than use your fingers to push the cap firmly into place, it’s better to push the cap against a firm surface.
- Have a sharps container within arms’ reach for immediate disposal of sharp.
- DO NOT bend, break or shear a contaminated needle or other sharp prior to disposal.

Fifth – Add personal protective equipment (PPE):

- PPE should be used as a last resort when a sharps hazard cannot be fully eliminated.
- Cut and Puncture-resistant gloves are available - evaluate for effectiveness, dexterity, and limitations (e.g. wire mesh works well for blades, but not needles).

Disposal

- Dispose of sharps in the correct sharps container. Sharps containers are available in a variety of sizes and colors to accommodate your needs.
- NEVER make a pile of unguarded needles or other sharps for later clean-up.
- NEVER use something other than a sharps container, e.g. a beaker, for temporary collection.
- NEVER dispose of any sharp into trash bags or the trash!
 - You are PERSONALLY responsible for the safe disposal of your sharps. Even if you know the sharp was used with something nonhazardous, the person who picks up your trash does not. If they get stuck, they’ll assume the worst (pathogens such as HIV, HBV, HCV, etc.)
 - <https://ehs.berkeley.edu/lessons-learned/lesson-learned-needlestick-regular-trash>

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Unbroken pipets are not considered sharps, but can pierce regular trash bags. To avoid that occurrence, follow the guidance below:

Syringes, needles, blades and contaminated broken glass **ALWAYS** go into a **Sharps Container**

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Green/Clear = Chemical contaminated Sharps Waste

* Uncontaminated syringes, needles, blades – any of the above, red preferred

Unbroken glass pipets
Contaminated - Sharps container
Uncontaminated – Sharps container or Cardboard broken glass container

Plastic pipets/tips
Contaminated - Sharps container or **Double-thick** waste bag
Uncontaminated - Cardboard broken glass container

Plastic pipets can pierce regular waste bags

I have read and understand this SOP/Safety Plan. I agree to fully adhere to its requirements.

Name	Title/Role	Signature	Date
	Principal Investigator		
	Lab Supervisor		