

# NEEDLESTICK / SHARPS / SPLASH INJURY GUIDANCE

## ACTION TO BE TAKEN FOLLOWING:

- Needlestick / sharps / splash injury with exposure to potentially infectious material
- Splash of human body fluid to eyes / mouth
- Human scratch / bite

### APPLY FIRST AID MEASURES AND IMMEDIATE IRRIGATION

#### WOUNDS:

- Encourage the wound to bleed by gently squeezing, and ideally holding it under running water
  - **DO NOT SUCK** the wound.
- Wash the wound well under running water using soap
  - **DO NOT SCRUB** the wound.
- Dry the wound and cover it with a waterproof plaster or dressing.

#### SPLASH INCIDENTS:

- If in the mouth: rinse mouth out several times with cold water
  - **DO NOT SWALLOW.**
- If into eyes: remove contact lenses (if applicable), irrigate eyes well with cold, running water or saline for at least 5 minutes .

#### REPORT INCIDENT TO YOUR LINE MANAGER OR SUPERVISOR:

Report the incident to your manager **immediately**, and in conjunction with your manager, complete the **sharps care pathway** to assess the Blood Borne Virus (BBV) infection risk – this will depend on the nature of the hazard associated with the incident.  
Record details of the source of the (potentially) infectious material, if known.

#### Hazard source: BBV Status unknown

- a used or dirty sharp;
  - a human bite or scratch;
  - human bodily fluid splash to eye or mucous membranes;
  - contamination of a cut or open skin lesion.
- CONTACT THE APPROPRIATE DEPARTMENT FROM THE LIST BELOW **IMMEDIATELY**.

#### Hazard source: known to be HIV, HEP B or HEP C positive

- a used or dirty sharp;
  - a human bite or scratch;
  - human bodily fluid splash to eye or mucous membranes;
  - contamination of a cut or open skin lesion.
- CONTACT THE APPROPRIATE DEPARTMENT FROM THE LIST BELOW **IMMEDIATELY**.

#### Hazard source: an unused, clean sharp which is **definitely** uncontaminated.

Complete an **Accident Report Form**.  
*If concerned, see further advice from the Occupational Health department.*

#### CONTACT IMMEDIATELY (if BBV status unknown, or known to be HIV, Hep B, or Hep C positive)

- If injured on a **QUB site within working hours**, contact QUB Occupational Health by phone AND email.  
Phone: 028 9504 0275  
Email: [occhealth@qub.ac.uk](mailto:occhealth@qub.ac.uk)  
Hours: Monday – Friday, 8.30am – 4.30pm
- If injured on a **hospital or community site**, contact the relevant Trust's Occupational Health department.
- If injured **out-of-hours, at weekends or bank holidays**, and the risk assessment indicates a **high-risk injury**, contact the relevant Emergency Department.

In addition to the contact above, each Trust has their own Sharps Care Pathway. This should be completed by the recipient following the injury and submitted to the relevant Occupational Health department.

#### BLOOD-BORNE VIRUS (BBV) RISK MAY ARISE FROM:

Human blood, amniotic fluid, cerebrospinal fluid, breast milk, pericardial fluid, peritoneal fluid, pleural fluid, blood-stained saliva, synovial fluid, semen, vaginal secretions, unfixed human tissue, any visibly bloodstained fluid, exudate from burns or skin lesions.  
It can be introduced via any break in the skin (needle, bite, cut) or a splash to the eye or mouth.



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