

Support Services - Maintenance / Housekeeping / Food Services

Environmental services employees are placed at risk by exposure to contaminated sharps used by other people such as health care workers, contaminated linen garbage or spills.

Inappropriately disposed of sharps in linen, garbage, on counters or from over-full sharps containers are key areas of concern.

Common tasks that put these workers at risk for blood and body fluid (BBF) exposures include:

- Handling sharps containers,
- Cleaning up blood or body fluid spills,
- Handling linen,
- Picking up broken glass or sharps from the floor.
- Repairing various types of equipment or machinery.

All staff should follow general or common BBF precautions and general sharps container practices.

- Sharps containers must be replaced when they are $\frac{3}{4}$ full or the fill line is reached.
 - This helps to prevent over filling or the protrusion of sharps from the opening and / or the sides of the containers.
- Never use your hand to push a protruding syringe or needle back into a sharps container.
- Broken glass and sharps must be picked up with forceps, brush and dust-pan, or suitable tool never with hands, even if gloves are worn.
- Clean up spills as soon as possible.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as gloves, gowns and eye protection should be worn when ever there is a potential for a BBF exposure.
- Eye protection should be worn when emptying containers of body fluids and whenever splashing may occur.
- If goggles or face shields are reused, they must be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- Staff are expected to use the appropriate PPE and should remind co-workers to wear PPE when appropriate.
- Wash hands after gloves are removed.
- Notify your supervisor and unit department manager immediately if sharps are found:
 - In trash or linen container
 - Have been left on beds or on counters
 - In bathroom or shower
 - On top of the sharps containers
 - On food trays
- Always lift plastic liners from garbage cans or linen bags with both hands. To avoid needlesticks;
 - Look at the exterior of the bag to see if there are any sharps protruding,
 - Never squish, compact or push down garbage or linen using hands or feet
- Hold the bag slightly away from your body when transporting it from one location to another.
- Equipment and machinery that is known or suspected to be contaminated with BBF should be cleaned prior to beginning work if possible.
- Tools that may be contaminated or exposed to BBF need to be cleaned prior to use in other areas.
- When working in patient rooms extra care needs to be taken to reduce the risks associated with BBF exposures.

General Blood and Body Fluid Safe Work Practices

The purpose of safe work practices are to provide a safer work environment for health care workers who may be exposed to Blood and Body Fluids (BBF) by handling:

- Sharps
- Initiating intravenous or subcutaneous access
- Administering medication via IM, SC routes

Workers who may be exposed to other Blood and Body Fluids such as:

- Splashes
- Soiled laundry
- Bio-hazardous waste or
- Other body fluids.

By following appropriate procedures and practices you will have taken steps to improve the safety of co-workers, patients and your self.



Sharps CARE

***Support
Services***

**Safe Work
Practices**



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