

SHARPS SAFETY AND NEEDLESTICK PREVENTION

Presented by Renee Robinson, CRSP – IPAC Consulting



Over 2 million needlestick injuries occur globally each year — 33,000+ in Ontario.



High risk of transmission: HIV, Hepatitis B & C.



Needlestick injuries can cause lasting physical and psychological harm.



Prevention is possible with proper tools, training, and awareness.

Key Legislation

Occupational Health & Safety Act (OHSA)

- Section 25(2)(h): Employers must take every precaution reasonable to protect workers.
- Promotes the Internal Responsibility System: shared responsibility for safety.

Needle Safety Regulation (O. Reg 474/07)

- Requires use of safety-engineered needles (SENs).
- Mandates staff consultation, training, and documentation.

Health Care & Residential Facilities Regulation (O. Reg 67/93)

- Focus on sharps handling, disposal, and PPE use.
- Aligned with IPAC best practices.

O. Reg 833 – Control of Exposure to Biological or Chemical Agents

- Requires exposure control plans and protective measures.
- Includes engineering controls and PPE for sharps handling.

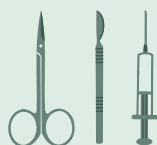
Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)

- Promotes risk assessments, hand hygiene, and PPE as part of routine practice.

What Are Sharps?



Objects that can puncture or cut skin.



Includes: needles, scalpels, broken glass, and dental instruments.



Injuries can occur during use or disposal.

Performing a PCRA (Point of Care Risk Assessment)

Before every task where sharps are present:

- What procedure will I do?
- Is there a risk of exposure to blood or bodily fluids?
- What PPE or precautions are required?

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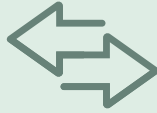


Hierarchy of Control



Elimination:

Use needleless systems.



Substitution:

Use safety-engineered needles (SENs).



Engineering Controls:

Use puncture-resistant sharps containers.



Administrative Controls:

Training, signage, and safe work procedures.



PPE:

Gloves, goggles, gowns.

Reporting Requirements

WSIB

- Report all needlestick injuries unless under a surveillance protocol with negative results.
- Report if the worker tests positive, receives treatment, or experiences emotional distress.
- Post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) for suspected HIV must be reported.

OHSA

- Notify MLITSD, JHSC/HSR, and unions (if applicable).
- Critical injuries: report immediately and in writing within 48 hours.
- Occupational illnesses: report within 4 days.

Note: It's illegal to discourage reporting.

Safe Handling Tips

- Never recap needles.
- Dispose of sharps immediately in proper containers.
- Keep containers at point-of-use and don't let them overfill.
- Be aware of your surroundings during handling.

If An Injury Occurs



Perform first aid – wash or flush the area.



Report immediately to your supervisor.



Seek medical attention.



Document the incident thoroughly.

Resources

- IPAC Consulting: Custom training and risk assessments
- PHAC and Ministry of Labour guidelines
- Your workplace's internal health & safety policies