



SHARPS INJURY & BLOOD EXPOSURE GUIDELINES

PURPOSE

These guidelines support the *Health and Safety Policy* and *Health and Safety Management Standards* and provide guidance for the care, reporting and follow-up of recipients who have been exposed to blood or body fluids through incidents involving sharps.

DEFINITIONS

Exposure	Contact with blood or body fluid contaminated with blood
Source	The person whose blood or body fluid was inoculated or splashed onto the recipient. (This person may not always be identifiable)
Recipient	The person exposed to blood or body fluids
Sharps/ Needle-stick	Any object capable of inflicting penetrating injury

1. Immediate First Aid

- 1.1 If the skin has been penetrated by a sharp object, wash the area well with soap and water or if this is not available, wash the area well with alcohol based skin rinses or foams of 60-90% alcohol
- 1.2 If intact skin is contaminated with blood or body fluids, wash the area with copious amounts of soap and water
- 1.3 If the eyes are contaminated with blood or body fluids, wash the eyes gently but thoroughly with water or normal saline
- 1.4 Should blood or body fluids spray into the mouth, spit out the blood or body fluids, then rinse the mouth several times with water
- 1.5 Stem any high volume blood loss by compression and elevation of the area

2. Medical Intervention and Follow-up

- 2.1 If a sharps injury, eye contamination or mouth contamination have occurred, refer the recipient to the Curtin Health Service or their own General Practitioner for assessment and review
- 2.2 Dependent on assessment of the exposure, the Medical Practitioner may request blood tests immediately and after six months to determine the infection status of the recipient.
- 2.3 The Medical Practitioner may also; dependent on assessment of the exposure, require that anti-retroviral medications be taken for a period of 4 weeks.
- 2.4 The Medical Practitioner may refer the recipient to the Curtin Counselling Services for follow-up emotional support



3. Reporting of the Incident

3.1 It is a requirement of Curtin University that all incidents or near misses including needle stick/sharps incidents are reported through the incident management system by the recipient or their delegate. Refer link below.

4. Ongoing Emotional Support

4.1 Staff members or students are encouraged to refer the recipient to the Curtin Counselling Services for follow-up emotional support. For more information please refer to the link below.

EXEMPTIONS

Nil

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS/LINKS

[Health and Safety Policy](#)

[Health and Safety Management Standards](#)

Health Department of Western Australia Operational Instruction OP0981/97. Sharps injury and blood exposure protocol.

Curtin Online Incident and Hazard Reporting
https://healthandsafety.curtin.edu.au/event_and_hazard/index.cfm

Curtin Counselling Service
http://unilife.curtin.edu.au/health_wellbeing/counselling_services.htm

Curtin Health Service
http://unilife.curtin.edu.au/health_wellbeing/health_services.htm

CONTACT DETAILS	
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REVISION HISTORY		
Revision #	Date	Amendment Description
1	26/02/2013	Issued for use
2	26/11/2014	Admin changes to 4.1 and footer
2.1	21/10/2016	Minor update – wording change to new online incident and hazard reporting system
2.2	08/02/2017	Addition of H&S Management Standards to Purpose and Relevant Documents sections