

Body Art: Proper Handling of Sharps

Safe disposal of sharps limits the risk of infection and prevents others from accidentally hurting themselves.

Do:

- Take your time handling all sharps
- Place all sharps in sharps container near artist's work area immediately after use
- Ensure the disposal container is made for handling sharps that meet NIOSH standards
- Replace the sharps container when full
- Use disposal services that are authorized to handle biomedical waste
- Get your Hepatitis B (HBV) vaccination

Don't:

- Do not put fingers in sharps container
- Do not remove, bend or break, or recap needle or sharp
- Do not reuse sharps container
- Do not use two hands to handle sharps, if possible
- Do not practice "freehand" piercing techniques

Sharps injury: What do you do?

1. Provide immediate care to the exposure site

Punctures to skin: Wash with soap and water for 15 minutes. Apply direct pressure to control bleeding

Mouth: Rinse several times with water

Eyes: Remove contact lenses. Flush with saline or water for 15 minutes or as tolerated

2. Seek medical attention to determine risk associated with exposure

3. Record Keeping

- a. Keep a Sharps Incident Log that includes:
 - i. Date of the injury
 - ii. Type and brand of the device involved
 - iii. Department or work area where the incident occurred
 - iv. Explanation of how the incident occurred
- b. Refer to the body art facility's Exposure Control Plan for jurisdiction-specific requirements

