



APOHS Services

Contamination Injury

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Needlestick/Contamination Injury

The term 'Needlestick Injury' is another way to describe a sharps injury.

What are Sharps?

Sharps include:

- needles
- scalpel blades
- stitch cutters
- syringes
- disposable scissors
- IV cannulae-introducers
- giving sets attached to fluid bags
- blood glucose lancets
- butterfly needles.

Who is at risk from sharps injuries?

Patients, staff and visitors may all be at risk in ward/department areas, where sharps are used. However, nurses and medical personnel tend to be at most risk (Royal College of Nursing /Infection Control Nurses Association).

What is the extent of the problem?

- Nurses receive the most injuries
- Sharps cause most problems
- Injuries most commonly occur on wards and in theatre
- Injuries tend to occur during the use of the item/after use but before disposal/putting in the sharps bin

Need to know what to do following a needlesstick injury?

First aid...

Stop what you are doing

Dispose of sharp immediately

Wash wound with soap and warm water (do not use antiseptics etc.)

Encourage bleeding if appropriate

Cover with plaster/dressing to prevent bleeding onto clothes/clinical area

Complete an incident form at the time of incident

Contact



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