



Exposure Prevention Information Network

1998 U.S. EPINet Needlestick and Sharp-Object Injury Report

International Healthcare Worker Safety Center, University of Virginia

Total hospitals contributing data = 52

Total Cases: 3,180

Total Average Daily Census: 9,681

JOB CATEGORY		
M.D. (attending/staff)	190	6%
M.D. (intern/resident/fellow)	293	9%
Medical student	28	1%
Nurse RN/LPN	1409	44%
Nursing student	13	0%
Respiratory therapist	68	2%
Surgery attendant	168	5%
Other attendant	132	4%
Phlebotomist/venipuncture/I.V. team	137	4%
Clinical laboratory worker	125	4%
Technologist (non-lab)	171	5%
Dentist	4	0%
Dental hygienist	3	0%
Housekeeper/laundry worker	130	4%
Paramedic	7	0%
Other student	33	1%
Other	266	8%
(3 missing)		

PLACE OF OCCURRENCE		
<i>Where did the injury occur in the institution?</i>		
Patient room	1121	35%
Outside patient room	61	2%
Emergency department	254	8%
Intensive/critical care unit	213	7%
Operating room	692	22%

Outpatient clinic/office	193	6%
Blood bank	7	0%
Venipuncture	17	1%
Dialysis facility	24	1%
Procedure room	159	5%
Clinical laboratories	91	3%
Autopsy/pathology	29	1%
Service/utility area	68	2%
Labor and delivery	39	1%
Home	49	2%
Other	162	5%
(0 missing)		

SOURCE PATIENT		
<i>Was the source patient known?</i>		
Yes	2824	89%
No	198	6%
Unknown	112	4%
N/A	46	1%
(0 missing)		

ORIGINAL USER		
<i>Was the injured worker the original user of the sharp item?</i>		
Yes	2016	63%
No	1041	33%
Unknown	45	1%
N/A	78	2%
(0 missing)		

CONTAMINATION		
<i>Was the sharp item:</i>		
Contaminated	2797	88%
Uncontaminated	87	3%
Unknown	296	9%
(0 missing)		

ORIGINAL PURPOSE		
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For what purpose was the sharp item originally used?

Unknown, N/A	284	9%
Injection, IM/subcutaneous	535	17%
Heparin or saline flush	89	3%
Other injection/aspiration I.V.	130	4%
Connect I.V. line	54	2%
Start I.V. or heparin lock	227	7%
Draw venous blood sample	553	17%
Draw arterial blood sample	106	3%
Obtain body fluid/tissue sample	50	2%
Fingerstick/heel stick	101	3%
Suturing	409	13%
Cutting (surgery)	194	6%
Electrocautery	9	0%
Contain specimen/pharmaceutical	34	1%
Place arterial line	16	1%
Fingernails/teeth	28	1%
Other	358	11%
(3 missing)		

HOW INJURY OCCURRED*Did the injury occur:*

Before use	56	2%
During use	1014	32%
Between steps	333	10%
Disassembling	154	5%
Preparing for reuse	52	2%
Recapping	114	4%
Withdrawing from resistant material	93	3%
Other after use, before disposal	694	22%
Item left on disposal container	24	1%
Putting item into disposal container	266	8%
After disposal	77	2%
Pierced side of disposal container	10	0%
Pierced side of inappropriate disposal container	116	4%
Restraining	14	0%
Other	158	5%
(3 missing)		

DEVICE

<i>What device or item caused the injury?</i>		
Disposable syringe	919	29%
Prefilled cartridge syringe	70	2%
Blood gas syringe	46	1%
Syringe, other type or not sure which	31	1%
Needle on I.V. line	60	2%
Winged steel needle I.V. set	256	8%
I.V. catheter (stylet)	195	6%
Vacuum tube blood collection needle	193	6%
Spinal or epidural needle	11	0%
Unattached hypodermic needle	54	2%
Arterial catheter introducer needle	7	0%
Central line catheter introducer needle	8	0%
Drum catheter needle	3	0%
Other vascular catheter needle	5	0%
Other non-vascular catheter needle	1	0%
Needle, not sure what kind	102	3%
Other needle	84	3%
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Lancet	98	3%
Suture needle	395	12%
Scalpel blade	149	5%
Razor	17	1%
Pipette (plastic)	2	0%
Scissors	32	1%
Bovie electrocautery device	8	0%
Bone cutter	4	0%
Bone chip	2	0%
Towel clip	8	0%
Microtome blade	10	0%
Trocar	11	0%
Vacuum tube, plastic	2	0%
Specimen/test tube, plastic	1	0%
Fingernails/teeth	33	1%
Scalpel, disposable	39	1%
Retractor, skin/bone hooks	18	1%
Staples/steel sutures	5	0%
Wire	14	0%
Pin	17	1%
Drill bit/bur	10	0%
Pickups/forceps/hemostats/clamps	10	0%
Sharp item, not sure what kind	47	1%
Other item	97	3%

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Medication ampule	11	0%
Medication vial (small)	3	0%
Medication/I.V. bottle (large)	1	0%
Pipette, glass	3	0%
Vacuum tube, glass	8	0%
Specimen/test tube, glass	10	0%
Capillary tube	4	0%
Glass slide	2	0%
Glass item, not sure what kind	5	0%
Other glass item	11	0%
(42 missing)		

SAFETY DESIGN		
<i>If the item causing the injury was a needle, was it a safety design with a shielded, recessed, or retractable needle?</i>		
Yes	290	9%
No/not applicable	2873	90%
(10 missing)		

SEVERITY OF INJURY		
<i>Was the injury:</i>		
Superficial	1549	49%
Moderate	1447	46%
Severe	114	4%
(66 missing)		

BODY PART	
Right hand, back	332
Right hand, front	901
Left hand, back	391
Left hand, front	1270
Right arm	56
Left arm	47
Head	8
Chest	5
Back	0
Mid-body	11
Right leg	31

Left leg	23
Right foot and ankle	9
Left foot and ankle	12
(66 missing)	

OSHA		
<i>Is this incident OSHA reportable?</i>		
Yes	614	19%
No	1795	56%
(769 missing)		

<i>For those cases that are OSHA reportable:</i>	
Cumulative number of days away from work:	19
Cumulative number of days of restricted work activity:	16