



Exposure Prevention Information Network

1999 U.S. EPINet Needlestick and Sharp-Object Injury Report

International Healthcare Worker Safety Center, University of Virginia

Total hospitals contributing data = 21

Total cases: 1,996

Total average daily census: 5,118

JOB CATEGORY		
M.D. (attending/staff)	165	8%
M.D. (intern/resident/fellow)	278	14%
Medical student	24	1%
Nurse RN/LPN	790	40%
Nursing student	12	1%
Respiratory therapist	42	2%
Surgery attendant	96	5%
Other attendant	61	3%
Phlebotomist/venipuncture/I.V. team	83	4%
Clinical laboratory worker	79	4%
Technologist (non-lab)	90	5%
Dentist	5	0%
Dental hygienist	3	0%
Housekeeper/laundry worker	70	4%
Paramedic	7	0%
CNA/HHA	22	1%
Security	3	0%
Other student	36	2%
Other	129	7%
(1,995 records)		

PLACE OF OCCURRENCE		
<i>Where did the injury occur in the institution?</i>		
Patient room	596	30%
Outside patient room	52	3%

Emergency department	134	7%
Intensive/critical care unit	152	8%
Operating room	508	25%
Outpatient clinic/office	120	6%
Blood bank	5	0%
Venipuncture	13	1%
Dialysis facility	12	0%
Procedure room	115	6%
Clinical laboratories	61	3%
Autopsy/pathology	24	1%
Service/utility area	37	2%
Labor and delivery	41	2%
Home-care	14	1%
Other	108	5%
(1,992 records)		

SOURCE PATIENT		
<i>Was the source patient known?</i>		
Yes	1,786	90%
No	128	6%
Unknown	59	3%
N/A	19	1%
(1,992 records)		

ORIGINAL USER		
<i>Was the injured worker the original user of the sharp item?</i>		
Yes	1,237	62%
No	667	33%
Unknown	34	2%
N/A	55	3%
(1,993 records)		

CONTAMINATION		
<i>Was the sharp item:</i>		
Contaminated	1,733	87%
Uncontaminated	50	3%
Unknown	207	10%
(1,990 records)		

ORIGINAL PURPOSE		
<i>For what purpose was the sharp item originally used?</i>		
Unknown, N/A	155	8%
Injection, IM/subcutaneous	319	16%
Heparin or saline flush	48	2%
Other injection into IV site or port	69	4%
Connect IV line	21	1%
Start IV or heparin lock	105	5%
Draw venous blood sample	325	16%
Draw arterial blood sample	55	3%
Obtain body fluid/tissue sample	33	2%
Fingerstick/heel stick	44	2%
Suturing	328	17%
Cutting (surgery)	165	8%
Electrocautery	12	1%
Contain specimen/pharmaceutical	29	1%
Place arterial line	21	1%
Fingernails/teeth	0	0%
Drilling	3	0%
Other	261	13%
(1,993 records)		

HOW INJURY OCCURRED		
<i>Did the injury occur:</i>		
During use	634	32%
Between steps	261	13%
Disassembling	92	5%
Preparing for reuse	33	2%
Recapping	69	3%
Withdrawing from resistant material	51	2%
Other after use, before disposal	349	18%
Item left on disposal container	8	0%
Putting item into disposal container	131	7%
After disposal, item protruding from disposal container	48	2%
Pierced side of disposal container	4	0%
Pierced trash/side of inappropriate disposal container	52	3%
Restraining patient	17	1%
Device left on floor/bed/table/inappropriate place	93	5%
Other	141	7%
(1,983 records)		

DEVICE		
<i>What device or item caused the injury?</i>		
Disposable syringe	506	26%
Prefilled cartridge syringe	33	2%
Blood gas syringe	27	1%
Syringe, other type or not sure which	20	1%
Needle on IV line/tubing	25	1%
Winged needle IV set	174	9%
IV catheter (stylet)	94	5%
Vacuum tube blood collection needle/holder	81	4%
Spinal or epidural needle	11	1%
Unattached hypodermic needle	42	2%
Arterial catheter introducer needle	3	0%
Central line catheter introducer needle	11	1%
Drum catheter needle	1	0%
Other vascular catheter needle	7	0%
Other non-vascular catheter needle	4	0%
Needle, not sure what kind	48	2%
Other needle	116	6%
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Lancet	43	2%
Suture needle	312	16%
Scalpel, reusable	90	5%
Razor	5	0%
Pipette (plastic)	2	0%
Scissors	21	1%
Bovie electrocautery device	9	1%
Bone cutter	4	0%
Bone chip	2	0%
Towel clip	4	0%
Microtome blade	4	0%
Trocar	5	0%
Specimen/test tube, plastic	2	0%
Fingernails/teeth	21	1%
Scalpel, disposable	58	3%
Retractor, skin/bone hooks	7	0%
Staples/steel sutures	3	0%
Wire	10	1%
Pin	6	0%
Drill bit/bur	15	1%
Pickups/forceps/hemostats/clamps	5	0%
Sharp item, not sure what kind	20	1%
Other item	69	4%

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Medication ampule	3	0%
Medication vial (small)	1	0%
Pipette, glass	4	0%
Vacuum tube, glass	12	1%
Specimen/test tube, glass	4	0%
Capillary tube	2	0%
Glass slide	1	0%
Glass item, not sure what kind	7	0%
Other glass item	11	1%
(1,963 records)		

SAFETY DESIGN

If the item causing the injury was a needle, was it a safety design with a shielded, recessed, or retractable needle?

Yes	164	9%
No/not applicable	1,790	91%
(1,954 records)		

SEVERITY OF INJURY

Was the injury:

Superficial	862	43%
Moderate	1,022	52%
Severe	98	5%
(1,982 records)		

BODY PART

Right hand	779
Left hand	1,032
Arm	53
Face/Head	24
Chest/Front	7
Leg	26
Foot and ankle	14
(1,935 records)	

OSHA

<i>Is this incident OSHA reportable?</i>		
Yes	296	26%
No	860	74%
(1,156 records)		