



Exposure Prevention Information Network

2002 U.S. EPINet Needlestick and Sharp-Object Injury Report

International Healthcare Worker Safety Center, University of Virginia

Total hospitals contributing data = 47

Total Cases: 1,732

Total Average Daily Census: 7,431

JOB CATEGORY		
M.D. (attending/staff)	139	8%
M.D. (intern/resident/fellow)	141	8%
Medical student	17	1%
Nurse RN/LPN	701	41%
Nursing student	8	0%
Respiratory therapist	37	2%
Surgery attendant	171	10%
Other attendant	46	3%
Phlebotomist/venipuncture/I.V. team	77	5%
Clinical laboratory worker	34	2%
Technologist (non-lab)	103	6%
Dentist	2	0%
Dental hygienist	1	0%
Housekeeper	56	3%
Laundry worker	3	0%
Paramedic	12	1%
CNA/HHA	27	2%
Security	2	0%
Other student	34	2%
Other	106	6%
(1,717 records)		

PLACE OF OCCURRENCE		
<i>Where did the injury occur in the institution?</i>		
Patient room	527	30%
Outside patient room	38	2%
Emergency department	157	9%
Intensive/critical care unit	119	7%
Operating room/recovery	508	29%
Outpatient clinic/office	76	4%
Blood bank	4	0%
Venipuncture center	14	1%
Dialysis facility	10	1%
Procedure room	82	5%
Clinical laboratories	30	2%
Autopsy/pathology	10	1%
Service/utility area	28	2%
Labor and delivery	34	2%
Home-care	13	1%
Other	76	4%
(1,726 records)		

SOURCE PATIENT		
<i>Was the source patient known/identifiable?</i>		
Yes	1,572	91%
No	96	6%
Unknown	41	2%
N/A	13	1%
(1,722 records)		

ORIGINAL USER		
<i>Was the injured worker the original user of the sharp item?</i>		
Yes	986	58%
No	659	39%
Unknown	22	1%
N/A	42	2%
(1,709 records)		

CONTAMINATION		
<i>Was the sharp item:</i>		
Contaminated	1,529	89%
Uncontaminated	44	3%
Unknown	141	8%
(1,714 records)		

ORIGINAL PURPOSE		
<i>For what purpose was the sharp item originally used?</i>		
Unknown, N/A	119	7%
Injection, IM/subcutaneous	327	19%
Heparin or saline flush	25	1%
Other injection into IV site or port	76	4%
Connect IV line	16	1%
Start IV or heparin lock	96	6%
Draw venous blood sample	244	14%
Draw arterial blood sample	46	3%
Obtain body fluid/tissue sample	26	2%
Fingerstick/heel stick	31	2%
Suturing	329	19%
Cutting (surgery)	145	8%
Electrocautery	8	1%
Contain specimen/pharmaceutical	7	0%
Place arterial line	35	2%
Fingernails/teeth	0	0%
Drilling	10	1%
Other	178	10%
(1,718 records)		

HOW INJURY OCCURRED		
<i>Did the injury occur:</i>		
Before use	39	2%
During use	537	31%
Between steps	222	13%
Disassembling	65	4%

Preparing for reuse	38	2%
Recapping	57	3%
Withdrawing from resistant material	57	3%
Other after use, before disposal	281	16%
Item left on disposal container	5	0%
Putting item into disposal container	107	6%
After disposal, item protruding from disposal container	28	2%
Pierced side of disposal container	1	0%
Pierced trash/side of inappropriate disposal container	29	2%
Restraining patient	16	1%
Device left on floor/bed/table/inappropriate place	108	6%
Other	132	7%
(1,722 records)		

DEVICE		
<i>What device or item caused the injury?</i>		
Disposable syringe	586	35%
Pre-filled cartridge syringe	19	1%
Blood gas syringe	17	1%
Syringe, other type or not sure which	16	1%
Needle on IV line/tubing	9	.5%
Winged needle IV set	112	7%
IV catheter (stylet)	76	5%
Vacuum tube blood collection needle/holder	44	3%
Spinal or epidural needle	6	0%
Unattached hypodermic needle	18	1%
Arterial catheter introducer needle	10	1%
Central line catheter introducer needle	11	1%
Drum catheter needle	1	0%
Other vascular catheter needle	5	0%
Other non-vascular catheter needle	1	0%
Needle, not sure what kind	35	2%
Other needle	59	4%
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Lancet	24	1%
Suture needle	317	19%
Scalpel, reusable	63	4%
Razor	14	1%
Pipette (plastic)	0	0%
Scissors	10	1%

Bovie electrocautery device	8	.5%
Bone cutter	2	0%
Bone chip	3	0%
Towel clip	8	.5%
Microtome blade	2	0%
Trocar	5	0%
Vacuum tube, plastic	0	0%
Specimen/test tube, plastic	0	0%
Fingernails/teeth	15	1%
Scalpel, disposable	63	4%
Retractor, skin/bone hooks	11	1%
Staples/steel sutures	5	0%
Wire	11	1%
Pin	7	0%
Drill bit/bur	8	.5%
Pickups/forceps/hemostats/clamps	9	.5%
Sharp item, not sure what kind	9	.5%
Other item	47	3%
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Medication ampule	1	0%
Medication vial (small)	0	0%
Pipette, glass	1	0%
Vacuum tube, glass	5	0%
Specimen/test tube, glass	7	0%
Capillary tube	1	0%
Glass slide	0	0%
Glass item, not sure what kind	3	0%
Other glass item	3	0%
(1,687 records)		

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	470	29%
No	1,062	66%
Unknown	80	5%
(1,612 records)		

IF SAFETY DESIGN:		
<i>If the item causing the injury was a safety design with a shielded, recessed, or retractable needle, was the safety mechanism activated?</i>		
Yes, fully	24	5.5%
Yes, partially	85	19.5%
No	326	75%
(435 records)		

IF SAFETY DESIGN:		
<i>If the item causing the injury was a safety design with a shielded, recessed, or retractable needle, did the injury happen?</i>		
Before activation	259	65%
During activation	91	23%
After activation	46	12%
(396 records)		

SEVERITY OF INJURY		
<i>Was the injury:</i>		
Superficial	858	50%
Moderate	776	46%
Severe	75	4%
(1,709 records)		

BODY PART	
Right hand	652
Left hand	951
Arm	49
Face/Head	3
Chest/Front	5
Back	4
Leg	29
Foot and ankle	8
(1,700 records)	

