

GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF SYRINGES AND NEEDLES

Purpose

To propose guidelines to **avoid the recapping of needles**, and techniques to follow if recapping is necessary.

Summary

Recapping needles puts personnel at risk for an accidental needle stick. This practice should be avoided when it is reasonable to do so. Plan the use of needles and syringes carefully. Advanced planning is very important; insuring that all necessary supplies are available (e.g. sharps container) will help reduce hazards and risks. Needle devices which have built-in safety control devices, such as those that use a self-sheathing needle, should be used when possible.

Guidelines

- 1) Place a syringe and needle in an appropriate sharps container immediately after use without recapping when it is reasonable to do so. This should always be the first choice.
- 2) Have a sharps container at the point of use. Sharps disposal containers may be mounted on the wall of the work area.
- 3) Never remove a protective cap with your mouth, and never replace a protective cap with your mouth.
- 4) Do not hand-pass exposed needles/syringes/sharps from one person to another. Use a predetermined neutral zone or tray for placing and retrieving. Verbally announce when sharps are being placed in the neutral zone.
- 5) When materials are drawn up into a syringe with one needle (e.g. 18 gauge) and the administration will be with a different needle (e.g. 27 gauge), consider using a needle holder or other instrument to remove the needle from the syringe barrel.
- 6) If you find used/exposed needles and/or syringes, carefully place them in a sharps container. Use a mechanical device, such as a forceps or clamp, to assist with disposal if necessary.
- 7) Recapping needles after contact with animals should be extremely rare, but there may be some exceptions:
 - a) Working with larger animals, uncooperative animals, or minimally restrained animals may necessitate the need for recapping.
 - b) It is appropriate to recap syringe needles using the one-handed (passive) technique when there will be a delay in use or a need to transport the syringe before or after administration.
- 8) If recapping is necessary based on specific circumstances, a one-handed technique should be used.
 - a) Place the cap on a flat surface, then remove your hand from the cap.

- b) Insert the syringe needle tip deep into the plastic protective cap on the flat surface.
- c) Press the tip of the plastic cap against an inanimate object in order to secure it in place.
- d) Never use two hands to begin the needle recapping process.



Or

- a) Place the cap on a flat surface, then remove your hand from the cap.
 - b) With one hand, hold the syringe and use the needle to "scoop up" the cap.
 - c) When the cap covers the needle completely, use the other hand to secure the cap on the needle hub. Be careful to handle the cap at the bottom only (near the hub).
- 9) Minimize the distance or length of time one walks around with syringes and needles, whether filled for injection or empty.
- 10) Avoid carrying syringes around in your hand or pocket. Place them in a secondary hard plastic container for transport.

ONE HANDED RECAPPING TECHNIQUE

Only recap when absolutely necessary



1. Place cap on hard flat surface.



2. Scoop cap with end of needle so that the cap is sitting on the needle.



3. Press the cap and needle on the hard flat surface until the cap snaps into place.

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