



Exposure Prevention Information Network

2001 U.S. EPINet Needlestick and Sharp Object Injury Report

International Healthcare Worker Safety Center, University of Virginia

Total hospitals contributing data = 58

Total Cases: 1,929

Total Average Daily Census: 8,703

JOB CATEGORY		
M.D. (attending/staff)	152	8%
M.D. (intern/resident/fellow)	127	7%
Medical student	13	1%
Nurse RN/LPN	836	44%
Nursing student	12	1%
Respiratory therapist	30	2%
Surgery attendant	172	9%
Other attendant	27	1%
Phlebotomist/venipuncture/I.V. team	114	6%
Clinical laboratory worker	38	2%
Technologist (non-lab)	94	5%
Dentist	2	0%
Dental hygienist	0	0%
Housekeeper	64	3%
Laundry worker	2	0%
Paramedic	7	0%
CNA/HHA	48	3%
Security	2	0%
Other student	27	1%
Other	151	8%
(1,918 records)		

PLACE OF OCCURRENCE		
<i>Where did the injury occur in the institution?</i>		
Patient room	601	31%

Outside patient room	45	2%
Emergency department	177	9%
Intensive/critical care unit	91	5%
Operating room	564	29%
Outpatient clinic/office	92	5%
Blood bank	1	0%
Venipuncture center	16	1%
Dialysis facility	13	1%
Procedure room	77	4%
Clinical laboratories	38	2%
Autopsy/pathology	14	1%
Service/utility area	29	2%
Labor and delivery	38	2%
Home-care	26	1%
Other	98	5%
(1,920 records)		

SOURCE PATIENT		
<i>Was the source patient known?</i>		
Yes	1,733	90%
No	124	7%
Unknown	47	2%
N/A	16	1%
(1,920 records)		

ORIGINAL USER		
<i>Was the injured worker the original user of the sharp item?</i>		
Yes	1,098	58%
No	735	39%
Unknown	35	2%
N/A	31	2%
(1,899 records)		

CONTAMINATION		
<i>Was the sharp item:</i>		
Contaminated	1,701	89%
Uncontaminated	52	3%
Unknown	157	8%

(1,910 records)

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

Unknown, N/A	152	8%
Injection, IM/subcutaneous	396	21%
Heparin or saline flush	32	2%
Other injection into IV site or port	86	5%
Connect IV line	16	1%
Start IV or heparin lock	91	5%
Draw venous blood sample	298	16%
Draw arterial blood sample	42	2%
Obtain body fluid/tissue sample	29	2%
Fingerstick/heel stick	44	2%
Suturing	342	18%
Cutting (surgery)	145	8%
Electrocautery	9	0%
Contain specimen/pharmaceutical	11	1%
Place arterial line	24	1%
Fingernails/teeth	0	0%
Drilling	12	1%
Other	181	10%

(1,910 records)

HOW INJURY OCCURRED*Did the injury occur:*

Before use	41	2%
During use	564	30%
Between steps	257	13%
Disassembling	79	4%
Preparing for reuse	36	2%
Recapping	68	4%
Withdrawing from resistant material	67	4%
Other after use, before disposal	314	16%
Item left on disposal container	12	1%
Putting item into disposal container	122	6%
After disposal, item protruding from disposal container	53	3%
Pierced side of disposal container	5	0%
Pierced trash/side of inappropriate disposal container	39	2%
Restraining patient	10	1%

Device left on floor/bed/table/inappropriate place	116	6%
Other	130	7%
(1,913 records)		

DEVICE		
<i>What device or item caused the injury?</i>		
Disposable syringe	657	36%
Prefilled cartridge syringe	51	3%
Blood gas syringe	21	1%
Syringe, other type or not sure which	14	1%
Needle on IV line/tubing	9	1%
Winged needle IV set	121	7%
IV catheter (stylet)	66	4%
Vacuum tube blood collection needle/holder	76	4%
Spinal or epidural needle	5	0%
Unattached hypodermic needle	18	1%
Arterial catheter introducer needle	10	1%
Central line catheter introducer needle	6	0%
Drum catheter needle	0	0%
Other vascular catheter needle	4	0%
Other non-vascular catheter needle	1	0%
Needle, not sure what kind	42	2%
Other needle	65	4%
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Lancet	41	2%
Suture needle	326	18%
Scalpel, reusable	77	4%
Razor	6	0%
Pipette (plastic)	0	0%
Scissors	14	1%
Bovie electrocautery device	9	1%
Bone cutter	6	0%
Bone chip	0	0%
Towel clip	4	0%
Microtome blade	6	0%
Trocar	2	0%
Vacuum tube, plastic	1	0%
Specimen/test tube, plastic	0	0%
Fingernails/teeth	4	0%
Scalpel, disposable	48	3%
Retractor, skin/bone hooks	14	1%
Staples/steel sutures	3	0%

Wire	15	1%
Pin	11	1%
Drill bit/bur	3	0%
Pickups/forceps/hemostats/clamps	8	0%
Sharp item, not sure what kind	8	0%
Other item	45	2%
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Medication ampule	1	0%
Medication vial (small)	0	0%
Pipette, glass	0	0%
Vacuum tube, glass	5	0%
Specimen/test tube, glass	5	0%
Capillary tube	1	0%
Glass slide	2	0%
Glass item, not sure what kind	2	0%
Other glass item	10	1%
(1,843 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	401	22%
No	1,291	72%
Unknown	103	6%
(1,795 records)		

IF SAFETY DESIGN:

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

Yes, fully	44	12%
Yes, partially	61	17%
No	264	72%
(369 records)		

IF SAFETY DESIGN:

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

Before activation	187	58%
During activation	84	26%

After activation (325 records)	54	17%
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SEVERITY OF INJURY		
<i>Was the injury:</i>		
Superficial	918	49%
Moderate	866	47%
Severe	76	4%
(1,860 records)		

BODY PART	
Right hand	735
Left hand	1,030
Arm	46
Face/Head	5
Chest/Front	5
Back	2
Leg	22
Foot and ankle	7
(1,852 records)	