

SOP Template: Sharps Disposal and Handling Instructions

This SOP provides detailed **sharps disposal and handling instructions** to ensure safe and effective management of needles, blades, and other sharp medical instruments. It covers proper handling techniques to minimize injury risk, correct disposal methods using designated sharps containers, procedures for dealing with accidental sharps injuries, and compliance with health and safety regulations. This protocol aims to protect healthcare workers, patients, and the environment from potential hazards associated with sharps waste.

1. Purpose

To establish safe and consistent procedures for handling and disposing of sharps to prevent injury, contamination, and environmental hazards.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all healthcare staff who handle needles, blades, scalpels, lancets, glass pipettes, and any other sharp items in the facility.

3. Definitions

- **Sharps:** Objects capable of puncturing or cutting skin, including needles, blades, scalpels, broken glass, etc.
- **Sharps Container:** Rigid, puncture-resistant, leak-proof container specifically designed for sharps disposal.

4. Responsibilities

- All staff must follow these instructions when handling or disposing of sharps.
- Supervisors are responsible for providing training and ensuring compliance with this SOP.

5. Procedure

1. Handling Sharps

- Always handle sharps with care; avoid recapping needles by hand.
- Use forceps or safety devices when possible.
- Do not pass sharps hand-to-hand; use a neutral zone or tray.
- Keep sharps pointed away from your body and others.

2. Disposal of Sharps

- Immediately dispose of used sharps in an approved sharps container.
- Do not overfill sharps containers; replace when $\frac{3}{4}$ full.
- Do not attempt to retrieve items from a sharps container.
- Seal and label full containers for appropriate waste disposal collection.

3. Accidental Sharps Injury

- Remove gloves and wash the wound with soap and water-do not squeeze the wound.
- Inform your supervisor immediately and seek medical attention.
- Follow facility's incident reporting procedures.

4. Sharps Spill or Breakage

- Isolate the area and prevent access.
- Use mechanical means (forceps, dustpan, cardboard) to collect sharps for disposal; never use hands directly.
- Clean and disinfect the area as appropriate.

6. Compliance and Training

- All staff must complete annual training on sharps safety procedures.
- Regular audits will be conducted to ensure compliance with this SOP and regulatory requirements.

7. References

- OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Standard (29 CFR 1910.1030)
- Facility Waste Management Policy
- CDC Guidelines on Sharps Safety

8. Emergency Contact Information

Type of Emergency	Contact	Phone
Medical Incident/Injury	Occupational Health	XXX-XXX-XXXX
Sharps Disposal Issues	Waste Management	XXX-XXX-XXXX

Note: Non-compliance with this SOP may result in disciplinary action and increased risk of injury or environmental harm.