

SOP: Sharps Handling and Disposal Procedures

This SOP details the **sharps handling and disposal procedures** to ensure safe management of needles, scalpel blades, and other sharp medical instruments. It covers proper usage, containment, segregation, and disposal methods to minimize the risk of injury and contamination. The guidelines promote compliance with health and safety regulations, reduce environmental impact, and protect healthcare workers, patients, and waste management personnel from sharps-related hazards. Proper training, use of designated sharps containers, and timely disposal protocols are emphasized for effective sharps waste management.

1. Purpose

To ensure safe and compliant practices for handling and disposing of sharps in order to prevent injury and minimize risk of infection and contamination.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all staff, contractors, and personnel handling sharps in the facility, including needles, scalpels, lancets, and glass slides.

3. Responsibilities

- **All personnel:** Follow procedures outlined in this SOP.
- **Supervisors/Managers:** Ensure staff are trained and SOP is implemented.
- **Waste Management:** Collect and process sharps containers as per regulatory guidelines.

4. Definitions

Term	Definition
Sharps	Items capable of puncturing or cutting skin, such as needles, scalpels, lancets, and broken glass.
Sharps Container	Puncture-resistant, leak-proof, labeled containers designed for sharps collection and disposal.

5. Procedure

1. Sharps Usage

- Minimize handling of sharps when possible.
- Use safety-engineered devices where available.
- Do not recap, bend, or break needles after use.

2. Containment

- Immediately dispose of used sharps in designated sharps containers.
- Ensure containers are easily accessible in areas where sharps are used.
- Do not overfill containers; replace when 3/4 full.

3. Disposal

- Seal containers properly when full.
- Transport containers using appropriate PPE (personal protective equipment).
- Store containers in designated secure areas pending collection.

4. Sharps Container Collection and Disposal

- Licensed waste contractors to collect and dispose of filled containers according to local, state, and federal regulations.

6. Training

- All personnel to receive initial and annual refresher training in sharps safety and disposal.
- Training records to be maintained by the department supervisor.

7. Incident Reporting

- Report all sharps-related injuries or exposures immediately to management and complete the required incident report form.
- Participate in post-exposure evaluation and follow-up if necessary.

8. References

- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Bloodborne Pathogens Standard
- Local and national medical waste regulations

9. Document Control

Version	Date	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Approved by
1.0	2024-06-08	[Name]	[Reviewer Name]	[Approval Name]