

Responding to a Needlestick or Biological Exposure

Standard Operating Procedure

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An infectious agent is a viable micro-organism, or its toxin, which causes or may cause disease in humans or animals, and includes those agents listed in 42 CFR 72 or any other agent that causes or may cause severe, disabling, or fatal disease. Examples of infectious agents include:

- Infectious Agents
- Recombinant DNA
- Transgenic animals
- Select Agents
- Human derived tissues, fluid, and cells
- Biological toxins
- Animal tissue, fluids, and cells (Known or suspected of being infectious)

Use the following procedure when an individual is exposed to an infectious agent by a:

- Needlestick
- Injury from another sharp object
- Splash of fluid

Procedure: Responding to a Needlestick or Biological Exposure

1. How did the exposure to the infectious agent occur? By a:
 - Needlestick or cut, go to step 2.
 - Splash of fluid, go to step 3.
2. Wash the needlestick or cut with soap and water, then go to step 4.
3. Where did the splash make contact with the individual? In the:
 - Nose, mouth, or skin, flush area with water. Go to the next step.
 - Eyes, then irrigate the eyes with water or a saline solution. Go to the next step.
4. Go to the emergency room, Occupational Health Services, or University Health Services for an evaluation.

NOTE: An appointment is not needed.

NOTE: Inform the medical staff of the nature of the organisms, tissues, materials or chemicals being manipulated. This information enables the medical staff to assess the infection risks and determine whether any vaccinations might be needed.

5. Complete the following forms:
 - [Laboratory Incident and Near Miss Report](#) and submit to EHS
 - [Illness or Injury Report Form](#) and submit it to Work Connections
6. Upon return to work, cover injury with a water-proof wrapping, or some other impervious dressing, to prevent further contamination.