

SAFE WORK PROCEDURE FOR PICKING UP SHARPS AND OTHER ITEMS

Needles and other items (for example, condoms) that may carry the HIV and the hepatitis B and C viruses are often thrown away in streets, public washrooms, regular garbage, parks, alleys, vacant lots, and on beaches. They have also been found under mattresses and pillows, in garbage cans, and behind toilets.

Don't pick up sharps and other items unless you have the proper equipment and PPE, and you have been instructed how to do so safely. Don't pick up anything with the intention of discarding it later. For example, don't put a used needle in your pocket that isn't in a proper pocket container. You could injure yourself before you discard it.

Do not place needles in regular garbage under any circumstances. You may create a hazard for others.

Follow these steps to pick up improperly discarded sharps and other items that could carry HIV and the hepatitis B and C viruses:

1. Your worksite is supplied with waterproof gloves and sharps collector containers (both large and one-needle containers). Have disposable waterproof gloves and the proper sharps container ready.
2. Put the gloves on (see Safe Work Procedure for Removing Disposable Gloves). Place the sharps container next to the needle or other item. Do not hold the container in your hand, or you might accidentally puncture yourself.
3. If you are comfortable using tongs or pliers, use them to pick up the needle (or other item) and place it into the sharps container. This is the preferred method. If you are not comfortable using the tongs or pliers, pick up the needle by its shaft - with your gloved hand. In both cases, place the needle into the sharps container, pointed end first, away from you. Do not insert your fingers into the opening of the container and keep your free hand out of the way.
4. Remove and discard the gloves using proper procedures. Wash your hands with soap and water.
5. Don't fill the large sharps container to the top. When it is about three-quarters full replace it with a new one and properly dispose of the old one.
6. Dispose of the container as directed. Inform the office if the supply of sharps containers and/or gloves requires replenishing.

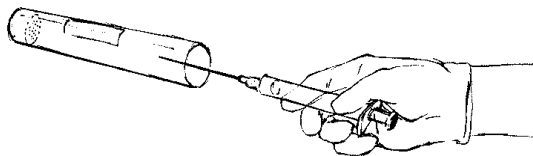
Do not reach for objects you cannot see. Look before reaching. Don't use your hands to feel or reach into any area or container if you can't see the contents or if you don't know what's there. Use a long-handled stick or other object - not your hands - to explore hidden spots. A flashlight could be used to move objects and to shed light on hard-to-see objects. Empty the contents of purses, packs, and other containers by turning them upside down over a table or other flat surface.

Picking Up Condoms

If you find a used condom, do not use your bare hands to pick it up. Use waterproof gloves, tongs, or something else to pick it up and throw it in the garbage.

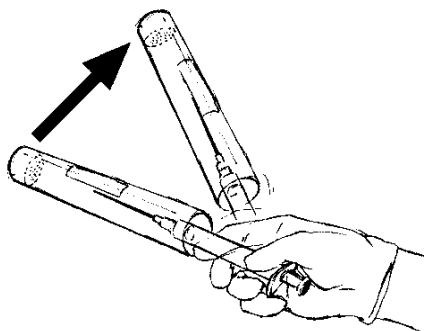
How to Pick Up a Needle Using a One-Needle Container

One-needle containers - that fit easily into pockets - have been designed for outdoor workers who may not be close to sharps disposal equipment. The following method is for a one-needle container. You must use only **one hand** with this technique to avoid jabbing yourself:



Use one hand only, ease the sharp end of the needle into the container. Wear disposable, waterproof gloves.

Use a proper puncture-resistant and leak proof, one-needle container. Hold the blunt end of the syringe in one hand. Then ease the sharp end of the needle into the opening of the container. Do not use your other hand to guide it.



Lift and tip the needle and container up so that the container falls down over the needle and covers the sharp end of the needle.

- Once the sharp end of the needle is enclosed in the container, you can safely grasp the container and syringe with your other hand to place the cap on the container. Make sure the cap is on securely. When you turn the container over (cap up), the needle will embed itself in the styrofoam plug. Discard in a suitable disposal container at your first opportunity.
- Remove and discard the gloves. Wash your hands with soap and water at your first opportunity.



MAKE SURE CAP IS ON SECURELY.