

GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE SAFETY AND INFECTION CONTROL

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INTRODUCTION

Guidelines for Employee Safety and Infection Control

This manual is to help CSUF Student Health and Counseling Center employees, and, in particular, health care providers, become more informed regarding health and safety issues within the facility. Additionally, the manual will serve to provide a clear and standardized means for the identification, management, and reporting of potential health-threatening incidents in the work place.

Keep this information readily accessible, and refer to it should any situation arise which you feel should be brought to the attention of your supervisor, or should you suffer an injury or infection “exposure” of a nature necessitating medical care.

Prepared by: CSUF Student Health and Counseling Center

DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

1. Health Care Provider (HCP)

Any CSUF Student Health and Counseling Center employee who provides direct patient care, who handles patient specimens, such as blood, vaginal secretions, tissue samples, et cetera, or who administers vaccinations, injections, et cetera.

This definition includes, but is not limited to:

- Physicians
- Registered Nurses
- Licensed Vocational Nurses
- Clinical Aides
- Nurse Practitioners
- Laboratory Personnel
- Physical Therapists
- Radiology Technicians
- Podiatrists
- Optometrists

2. Waste Disposal Area (WDA)

3. Student Health and Counseling Center (SHCC)

COMMON SAFETY PRACTICES

CSUF STUDENT HEALTH AND COUNSELING CENTER QUICK GUIDE TO COMMON SAFETY PRACTICES FOR ALL EMPLOYEES

1. WASH YOUR HANDS FREQUENTLY.

The single best way to prevent cross-infection is by washing your hands often. Use the disinfectant soap provided in your work area, and wash with this soap a minimum of 10 seconds before rinsing. Do so after each patient contact.

2. HANDLE ALL SPECIMENS, AND ANY ITEMS WHICH HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH PATIENT BODY SUBSTANCES, AS THOUGH THEY ARE INFECTIOUS.

3. CLEAN UP ALL SPILLS IMMEDIATELY.

4. USE GLOVES.

Gloves must be worn when handling specimens, performing exams during which body substances may be contacted, changing dressings, et cetera. Also, when emptying infectious waste containers.

5. DO NOT EAT IN YOUR WORK AREA.

There are designated areas within and without the SHCC for this purpose; please use them. Food may be placed in refrigerators located in the lounge. Food is not to be stored in any of the refrigerators used for clinical specimens, injection supplies, et cetera.

6. ALL WASTE IS TO BE DISPOSED OF IN THE PRESCRIBED MANNER.

All infectious waste is to be disposed of as noted in the Infectious Waste Policy in the Procedure section of this manual. Any glass or sharp object is to be placed in the appropriate red plastic puncture-proof container. All contaminated disposal equipment and supplies are to be placed in double red bags prior to being taken to the infectious waste disposal area.

7. BE PREPARED.

In case of an emergency, members of the Student Health and Counseling Center have special responsibilities for their patients and the campus community. Familiarize yourself with the disaster plan and procedures in the "Guidelines and Procedures Manual."

EMPLOYEE SAFETY GUIDELINES

I. Employee Responsibilities

A. As an employee, you should:

1. Comply with all regulatory standards concerning safety.
2. Follow all employer safety and health rules and regulations, and wear or use prescribed protective equipment while engaged in work that requires such equipment.
3. Immediately report any hazardous conditions to your supervisor.
4. Immediately report any job-related injury or illness to your supervisor, who will ensure that appropriate treatment is promptly initiated and that the proper forms and reports are completed.
5. Read and understand this manual; it contains information for your protection while at work.

II. Reporting Accidents and Illnesses

- A. It is the SHCC employee's responsibility to inform the employee's supervisor of the reason for any loss of work time due to illness or infection.
- B. It is the SHCC employee's responsibility to fill out the proper forms for any work-related illness or injury. Every injury or illness received in connection with assigned job duties, no matter how minor, is to be reported at the time of the injury or onset of the illness. The forms are available from your supervisor. Please note that the signing or completion of forms is not intended to impede treatment. If there is a question, seek treatment first and fill out the forms later.

III. General Student Health and Counseling Center Safety Rules and Regulations

The following procedures are designed to minimize the risk of accidental injuries to SHCC employees. All personnel, including student assistants, will familiarize themselves with proper safety procedures, equipment, and practices described below. Since it is not possible to identify all biohazardous samples, all clinical material that may come in contact with body substances is to be considered a potential biohazard and handled as described in the manual.

- A. Do not take unnecessary risks. If you are not certain about the safe way to do a job, ASK.
- B. Accidents or injuries must be reported promptly. This includes needlesticks, punctures, burns, lacerations, and splashes to mucous membranes, et cetera.

- C. Personal safety equipment (gloves, goggles, masks, gowns, et cetera) are available. Familiarize yourself with their location and use them whenever necessary.
 - D. Safety equipment (shower, fire extinguishers, et cetera) is available within the SHCC. Familiarize yourself with the location of these facilities
 - E. Personnel are expected to dress in a clean, safe, and professional manner. Beards and hair should be neat, professional, and of a length that presents no safety hazard.
 - F. **WASH YOUR HANDS FREQUENTLY.** If you are involved in direct patient care, you must wash your hands after each contact. This is the single most effective way to protect both you and the patient from disease transmission. Also, wash your hands before eating and at the end of the workday.
 - G. Cuts on hands should be adequately dressed. If the particular work activity involves a significant risk of contact with blood or body products, finger cots or disposable gloves are to be worn.
 - H. Lab coats should be worn only in the work area. If you leave your work area for any reason, remove your lab coat.
- IV. Disposal of Sharps, Glass, and Needles
- A. All chipped, broken, or dirty glasses, needles, knife blades, et cetera, are to be disposed in sharps containers.
 - B. Used needles are to be placed in the sharps containers, located in each exam room and strategically throughout the clinic. When each container is 2/3 full, it is to be locked, removed, and placed in the medical storage room for disposal. **NEVER DISCARD NEEDLES IN ANY OTHER MANNER! NEEDLES ARE NEVER TO BE RE-CAPPED!**
- V. Infectious Waste Disposal
- A. Disposal of infectious waste is to be accomplished in the following manner:

Any container, disposable item, dressing, et cetera, which has come in contact with the patient or any of the patient's body fluids is to be considered infectious and treated as such. Infectious waste containers are labeled and prominently placed in all examination rooms and in the emergency room area. When full, the contents of these containers are to

be double red-bagged, tied securely, and taken to the medical storage room.

VI. Hazardous Chemical and Disposal Procedure

A. CHEMICAL HAZARDS

The following is a list of the commonly used hazardous chemicals in the SHCC:

Acetone, disinfectants, germicides, iodine, alcohol, nitrogen, trichloroacetic acid.

The following guidelines are to be used when handling hazardous chemicals:

1. Wear protective gloves when handling caustic acids, alkalis, and organic solvents.
2. Never work with large amounts of a dangerous chemical when alone.
3. Never pipette hazardous chemicals by mouth; use a pipette bulb at all times.
4. Always add acid to water; NEVER add water to acid.
5. Wear goggles.

B. STORAGE AND DISPOSAL OF FLAMMABLE SOLVENTS

1. DEFINITION:

Flammable solvents are defined as liquid substances having a flash point below 60 degrees Celsius and having a vapor pressure not exceeding 40 PSI at 38 degrees Celsius. These include, but are not limited to: Acetone, ether, xylene, toluene, benzene, and alcohol.

2. STORAGE:

No flammable solvents are to be stored in refrigerators of any type within the Student Health and Counseling Center.

3. DISPOSAL:

- a. The amount of flammable chemicals disposed of from the SHCC is normally very small.
- b. When disposal of any chemical or reagent is necessary, the Environmental Health and Instructional Safety Department is to be contacted for proper removal and disposal. Inform stock clerk to initiate the process.

VII. Accidents and Spills

A. CHEMICAL SPILLS

1. Assess the material spilled, i.e., flammable, acid, base, et cetera, and use the correct antidote. Notify your supervisor of any significant type of chemical spill. Sodium bicarbonate is kept in the cupboard in the lab for use on spills.

a. ACID SPILLS

Solid sodium bicarbonate is to be sprinkled on the spill and left for one hour to neutralize the acid. With gloves (rubber) and using a towel, wipe up the spill with copious amounts of water. Be careful not to splatter the liquid on yourself.

b. STRONG BASE SPILLS

For strong bases, such as sodium hydroxide, a weak solution of acetic acid is to be used. Pour the diluted acid on the spill and wipe up with a towel. Use copious amounts of water to dilute what is left of the spill. Again, be careful not to splatter any of the material on yourself.

c. FLAMMABLE SPILLS

For flammable liquids, such as alcohol, be certain to wipe up immediately with copious amounts of water.

2. If a corrosive or caustic chemical is spilled on an employee:
 - a. The individual should activate the emergency shower located in the lab.
 - b. If clothing removal is necessary, the shower/dressing room in the men's and women's locker room is available. Proceed immediately to the shower located in the women's or men's restroom located in the lounge area.
 - c. While under the shower, remove all clothing that has been saturated with the chemical.
 - d. Other personnel are to assist the affected person as necessary.
 - e. The affected person is to remain under the shower, rinsing the exposed areas, for at least 15 minutes.
 - f. Report the incident to your supervisor and seek appropriate treatment in the emergency room.

B. EYE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY EYE TREATMENT

If you or a coworker should get acid or any caustic solution in the eye(s), **IT IS CRITICAL THAT THE EYE(S) BE FLUSHED WITH SALINE/WATER IMMEDIATELY!** Contact the same day provider without delay and ask for immediate assistance to ensure that the eye is being properly washed. If necessary, hold the eye open and flush out over the sink. **REMEMBER:** A few seconds wasted could mean the loss of a person's eyesight. Call the same day provider immediately and inform your supervisor as soon as possible.

VIII. Lifting

- A. Avoid lifting heavy objects when possible. In most cases, heavy objects can be moved by pushing. If not, get help. Do not lift heavy objects alone.
- B. When lifting, be sure that you have good footing. Keep your feet about 18 inches apart.
- C. Bend at the knees, not at the waist, and grasp the object.

- D. Keep the object close to you.
- E. Maintain a firm hold on the object.
- F. Keep arms and back as straight as possible.
- G. Lift gradually by straightening your legs.

IX. Electrical Safety

Shocks, burns, and laboratory fires result most often from neglect or relative lack of knowledge of electrical systems. Please report unsafe wiring to the stock clerk or administrative services manager. A work order for repair of the defect will be initiated, and appropriate signing (post signs) of the defective area will be promptly installed.

- A. Never use plugs that are worn or frayed. Report them immediately.
- B. Never work on equipment that is turned on and plugged in.
- C. All electrical equipment must be grounded.
- D. Only fused extension boxes, approved by Physical Plant, may be used in the SHCC.
- E. In the event of a power outage, there is emergency power available so equipment may be shut down systematically and notification of clinic closure is made by the clinic administration.

Specifications for Approved Appliances and Other Electrical Equipment

A. PORTABLE HEATERS:

In certain instances, adequate heating through Central Plant is not available and a portable heater may be allowed if it meets the following requirements and is approved by the Environmental Health Committee:

- a. Heater is Underwriters Lab (UL) listed.
- b. Is plugged directly into a wall outlet (no extension cords).
- c. Has a safety feature that shuts the unit off when tipped over.
- d. Is in good condition with no signs of damage.
- e. Does not use flammable liquids or solids for a fuel source.
- f. Is not placed where it will cause a tripping hazard.
- g. Is not used around combustible material (this includes carpets).
- h. Has heating elements that are guarded.

- i. Is not left unattended, and is unplugged when not in use.

B. HOME APPLIANCES AND LIGHTING FIXTURES:

It is preferred that home appliances (toasters, hot plates, fans, et cetera) and lighting fixtures not be used in state buildings. If used, such a unit must meet the following requirements and be approved by the Environmental Health Committee:

- a. Is UL listed.
- b. Is plugged directly into a wall outlet.
- c. Is in good condition with no signs of damage.
- d. Is placed where it will not cause a tripping hazard.

C. MULTI-OUTLET POWER ADAPTERS:

The preferred method of using electrical power is to plug equipment and/or appliances directly into the wall outlet. In certain instances, when additional outlets are needed, UL-approved power strips with overload protection will be allowed. The use of multi-plug adapters, such as cube adapters and strip plugs, is prohibited.

D. EXTENSION CORDS:

Approved extension cords may be used to provide power to electrical appliances and equipment on a temporary basis only. Extension cords shall not be used as a substitute for permanent wiring. All extension cords must be three-prong grounded cords, and must be plugged directly into an electrical outlet or a UL-approved power strip with overload protection.

Extension cords shall not be affixed to structures (for example, running up a wall and around a doorjamb to another part of the room) or extend through walls, ceiling, floors, or under doors or floor coverings. Inexpensive household (two-wire) extension cords are never allowed.

If you have questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to ask. Any employee or other person who observes unsafe wiring or any other unsafe condition should notify the department safety coordinator.

INFECTIOUS WASTE DISPOSAL

1. GUIDELINE

All infectious waste (as defined by Title 22 of the California Administrative Code), except certain recognizable anatomical remains and/or pathological specimens, will be disposed of by the clinical staff under the supervision of the clinical supervisor. Certain anatomical remains and/or pathological specimens will be disposed of in the infectious waste containers.

2. PROCEDURE

- A. At a minimum, all infectious waste will be collected within the area of origin and shall be double-bagged in red plastic bags of at least 165-gram dart impact resistant. The first red collection bag will be placed into a second red bag that has not been brought into the infectious area. Bagging is to be done in a manner that will reduce the hazard of injury or disease transmission.
- B. All used needles and syringes are to be considered an infectious waste. In accordance with state law, they must be appropriately discarded. Furthermore, said used needles and syringes are to be placed in rigid containers before being disposed in the 165-gram dart impact resistant red plastic bags. All sharp containers shall be labeled "Infectious Waste."
- C. Laboratory technicians store waste in the medical storage room.
- D. In the storage space, the double-bagged infectious waste will be placed directly into leak-proof, rodent-proof, storage container with a tight fitting lid, provided and maintained by an off-campus vendor.
- E. The storage container will be identified with a numerical code designating the generating institution and labeled with the words "Infectious Waste" or the international biohazard symbol and the word "Biohazard."
- F. The storage containers are located at SHCC in the medical storage room that is secured to deny access to unauthorized personnel. The area displays prominent warning signs in English, "Caution – infectious waste storage area – unauthorized persons keep out," and, in Spanish, "Cuidado-zona de residuos infectados – prohibida la entrada a personas no autorizadas." The storage area will be maintained in a clean and well-ventilated manner.
- G. The storage containers, intact as a unit, will be picked up by an off-campus vendor. In order to avoid petrification of waste, containers will be picked up at least every 96 hours, or four days.
- H. The volume of infectious waste to be transported and incinerated or sterilized per week is estimated at 200 lbs.

- I. Each new clinical aide will receive an in-depth orientation in the procedure for the in-house collection, transportation, and/or storage of infectious waste at this institution prior to his/her first day on the job. The person in charge of this area will supervise continual in-service training. Custodial training will be via the appropriate custodial supervisor.
- J. The local Director of Health will be promptly notified if this Individual Plan for Off-site Infectious Waste Disposal is either discontinued or altered.

PARENTERAL OR BODY FLUID EXPOSURE

1. **PURPOSE:**

To provide a guideline and procedure for managing employees who have incurred needle sticks and/or body fluid exposures. The most obvious of the concerns is the possibility of exposure to Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. Tetanus immunization status will also be evaluated in the instance of any puncture wound.

2. **DEFINITION:**

Any of the following incidents will be evaluated:

- a. Puncture wounds with needles or other sharp objects contained with blood, any body fluid containing visible blood, vaginal secretions, semen, or tissue.
- b. Mucous membrane contamination with saliva, genital secretions or feces (if they contain visible blood), synovial fluid, or tissue.
- c. Indirect percutaneous introduction of infective serum or plasma through cuts, lacerations, or abrasions.

3. **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- a. The employee's immediate supervisor should be made aware of all such incidents and will promptly notify the Executive Director and the Chief Staff Physician so that they can evaluate the incident for any infectious risk, via chart review of the exposure source.
- b. The same day provider will initiate testing and appropriate treatment for postexposure prophylaxis according to established CSUF/SHCC Employee Health guidelines.
- c. The SHCC Executive Director or designee is responsible for maintaining statistics on employee incidents involving possible or actual infectious

disease exposure, including a log of all needle sticks to include information on the type of device involved. This data shall be made available to SHCC staff.

4. EMPLOYEE:

- a. The employee is responsible for initiating the employee work injury report and notifying his/her supervisor.
- b. All incidents should be reported to the supervisor as soon as possible.

5. CLINICAL SUPERVISOR:

Supervisory personnel are responsible for documenting incidents by completing the “supervisors” section of the employee work injury report.

EMPLOYEE INFORMATION:

WORK RELATED RISKS OF HEPATITIS B AND INDICATIONS FOR VACCINATION

Hepatitis B is an infection that affects the liver. The infection is caused by a virus that may be present in blood, vaginal, or seminal fluid. In a medical setting, persons who routinely handle blood and tissue have an occupational risk of exposure to Hepatitis B.

Infection with the virus can cause serious health problems. Many persons exposed to Hepatitis B have only mild flu-like illness. Others, however, may become gravely ill and develop lifelong liver disease. Possible complications of infection include cancer of the liver, and possible death.

Hepatitis B can be prevented by immunization. The vaccine is genetically engineered, i.e., no human blood products are used in its manufacture. A series of three shots (given in the arm) are needed to provide protection. The immunizations are given over a six-month period of time. The entire sequence of shots must be taken to provide maximum immunity (>90% protection). The most commonly reported side effect from the vaccination is temporary soreness at the injection site. Please consult your health care provider or the Physician’s Desk Reference for complete details on the vaccine. In addition, a blood titre may be completed after 3-6 months to determine the level of immunity.

The following risk categories may be helpful to employees in deciding whether or not to be vaccinated. Antibody testing is available (for a nominal laboratory fee) to determine whether an employee has already been exposed to Hepatitis B. If you have already had an infection, there is no need to be immunized.

HIGH RISK

1. Performing vaginal exams and rectal exams.
2. Performing venipuncture.
3. Handling and disposal of body fluids, et cetera.

MODERATE RISK

1. Finger stick blood drawing while wearing gloves.
2. Cleaning up blood spills while wearing gloves.
3. Washing bloody instruments while wearing gloves.
4. Packaging filled blood tubes for transport.

LOW RISK

1. Handling urine samples.
2. No blood contact.

The risk of exposure to this virus may vary from person to person. A person who works every day has more potentially “risky” encounters than a person who works once a week. Some job responsibilities involve more exposure to blood or more risk of a needlestick injury. The best protection against all blood borne infections is careful and frequent handwashing, appropriate glove use, and care with the use of needles. However, CSUF Student Health and Counseling Center strongly advises all persons whose job responsibilities involve high and moderate risk to be immunized. Immunization is completely voluntary.

QUICK LOOK

HEPATITIS A, B, C, D, and E

1. Hepatitis A is transmitted by the fecal/oral route and food/waterborne outbreak. Blood borne transmission is rare.
2. Hepatitis B is transmitted by parenteral inoculation of blood products from infected persons, or percutaneous transfer of infected serum through skin cuts, bites, abrasions, sexual contact, and perinatally.
3. Hepatitis C is transmitted via a hematogenous, blood transfer route, as well as through sexual contact and perinatally.
4. Hepatitis D and E do exist, but are very rare in the United States.

Reviewed by:

Chief Staff Physician Date

Assistant Director Date

Executive Director Date

STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

Certification by Employee that all CSUF Student Health and Counseling Center safety and infectious waste guidelines have been read and are understood.

I hereby attest that I have read the CSUF Student Health and Counseling Center “Employee Safety Guidelines.”

It is my understanding that:

1. CSUF Student Health and Counseling Center places the utmost emphasis on safety in the workplace, and is specifically concerned with the matters contained in the CSUF Student Health and Counseling Center guideline and procedure manual.
2. Exposure to any material which may be contaminated with blood or bodily fluids or other possibly infectious agent is a special hazard. Consequently, I will report immediately to the clinical supervisor any accidental exposure to any specimen through a needle puncture, laceration, abrasion, splash, or any other wound so that a proper course of both care and recording can be undertaken.
3. In the event of an exposure to an infectious agent, the CSUF Student Health and Counseling Center strongly urges me to follow the appropriate exposure protocol. This protocol may include blood testing, Hepatitis B vaccine, Immune Serum Globulin, HIV testing (or counseling regarding the same), and vaccination appropriate to the condition is to be done at no expense to me (with the exception of the Hepatitis screen, done for a nominal charge).

Employee’s Signature

Date