

METHODIST HEALTHCARE

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METHODIST AMBULATORY SURGERY HOSPITAL

TITLE: Guidelines for Handling Sharps

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REVISED:

APPROVED: 3/04 Lillian Levesque – Nancy Ohlenburger, Employee Health

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to decrease the incidence of accidental needle punctures among hospital personnel and to provide consistency in needle disposal throughout the facility.

PROCEDURE:

1. Used needles/syringes, scalpel blades and other sharp items including red hub (blunt) cannula syringe filling device used with the Becton-Dickinson (BD) twin pack needlessness system should be placed in puncture-resistant containers for disposal; these puncture-resistant are located within close proximity to the area of use.
2. Needles should not be recapped, cut, or purposely bent before disposal.
3. Personnel should never reach into the needle container.
4. Containers are not allowed to be over filled.
5. Large-bore reusable needles should be placed in a puncture resistant container for transport to the reprocessing area.
6. Needle/syringe disposal containers are located in the following areas:
 - Freestanding needle containers are located in the ICUs, Operating Rooms, Recovery Rooms, Day Surgery, and Laboratory.
 - Wall-mounted puncture-resistant containers are located in each patient room excluding Psychiatric services and specific patient care services.

- Small red plastic disposal puncture resistant containers are available for use as needed.
7. Should an accidental needle puncture occur, an Occurrence Report must be completed and the Employee Health Nurse or nursing supervisor must be contacted immediately. The employee's supervisor will be responsible for follow-up as needed.

RESPONSIBILITY:

1. Each department will be responsible for exchanging filled containers.
2. Central Supply will store all clean back-up containers.
3. Full containers will remain in soiled utility room until scheduled pick-up.