



## Procedure in the event of a contamination / sharps incident

Exposure to the blood and body fluids of those infected with blood borne pathogens, like HIV, hepatitis B virus (HBV) and hepatitis C virus (HCV), poses a risk of occupationally-acquired infection. The greatest risk is posed by an injury by cutting or pricking the skin (percutaneous injuries), e.g., needlesticks and injuries from other sharp devices including I.V. cannula, winged steel needles, butterfly needles, vacuum blood collection systems, glass slides, stitch cutters, suture needles, lancets, scalpels, razors, scissors, patients teeth, etc. Broken glass that has contained/contains chemicals are viewed in the same way. The following advice also applies to spillage of blood, body fluids or chemicals on to skin, especially broken or eczematous skin, mucous membranes of the mouth or the eye.

### First Aid procedure for contaminated sharps Injury

1. First, encourage the wound to bleed, ideally by holding it under running water. Do not suck it.
2. Wash the wound using running water and soap, but do not scrub it.
  - If water is not immediately available continue to encourage the wound to bleed and go to the nearest toilet to wash the wound. Cleansing wipes from a first-aid kit can be used if running water is unavailable.
3. Dry the wound and cover it with a plaster or dressing.
4. Contact a Building Based First Aider or local first aider if a Building Based First Aider is not available.

### First Aid procedure for splash by blood, body fluids or chemicals

1. If eyes or broken skin areas are involved irrigate immediately with water for minimum of 10 minutes.
2. If the mouth is involved rinse with plenty of water but do not swallow or induce vomiting.
3. Where massive contamination of unbroken skin has occurred, remove contaminated clothing and wash all affected areas with copious amounts of water.
4. Contact a Building Based First Aider or local first aider if a Building Based First Aider is not available.

### What to do next for contaminated sharps injury or splash by blood, body fluids or chemicals

5. Immediately after following the first aid procedure seek medical advice from one of the following:
  - a) QMUL Staff\*\* during working hours (Monday to Friday 9am to 4:30pm) should call The QMUL Occupational Health Service on 020 7882 8700. Ground floor Geography Building Mile End. London. E1 4NS.  
[occhealth@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:occhealth@qmul.ac.uk)
  - b) QMUL Medical and Dental students\* during working hours (Monday to Friday 8.30am-4.30pm) should contact Barts Health NHS Trust Occupational Health Service. The Health and Wellness Centre. 31-43 Ashfield Street, Royal London Hospital, E1 2AH. Needle-stick line: 07745306654 (call this number BEFORE going to department). Reception: 020 3594 6609
  - c) QMUL Staff and Medical and Dental students outside of working hours should go to the nearest A&E department.

\*QMUL Medical students on placement should contact the Occupational Health Service of the hospital they are working in.

\*\*Staff from containment level III laboratories should go to A&E with the risk assessment / data sheet.

### Report the incident

The incident must be reported to Health & Safety Directorate using the online MySafety system

[https://qmul.oshens.com/AIR2/Incbook/incbook\\_tab\\_begin.aspx?First=1](https://qmul.oshens.com/AIR2/Incbook/incbook_tab_begin.aspx?First=1)

### Further information

- Occupational Health Service <http://www.hr.qmul.ac.uk/>
- HSD <http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/>
- Barts Health NHS Trust Occupational Health Service <http://www.bartsoh.co.uk/>
- Health & Safety Executive <http://www.hse.gov.uk/biosafety/blood-borne-viruses/risk-healthcare-workers.htm>
- NHS Choices <https://www.nhs.uk/chq/Pages/2557.aspx?CategoryID=72>