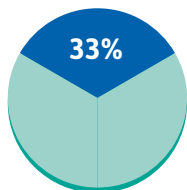


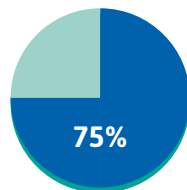


RISK AND PREVENTION OF SHARPS INJURIES IN THE O.R.

The operating room (O.R.) is recognized as a high-risk environment for occupational injury. Although sharp devices can cause injuries anywhere within the healthcare environment, data shows the majority of injuries occur in the O.R. Frequent passing, handling and disposal of sharps bring opportunities for O.R. staff to sustain sharps injury. Each sharps injury can potentially involve inadvertent exposure to serious bloodborne viral pathogens, including Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and/or many others.



33% of all reported occupational sharps injuries occur in the O.R.



75% were sustained while passing sharp devices between members of the surgical team^{1,2}

If you sustain a needlestick or sharps injury

- Wash the wound immediately with soap and water
- Seek prompt treatment
- Report the incident as soon as possible
- Discuss the risk of infection based on the circumstances of the injury
- Always follow your organization's policies and procedures

Tips for Prevention of Sharps Injuries³



Double Gloving

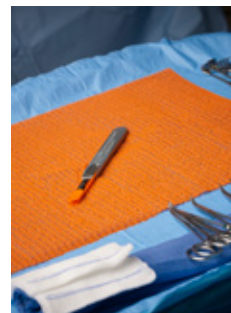
- Double gloving is recommended for all procedures
- Double gloving reduces risk of exposure to patient blood by as much as 87% when the outer glove is punctured⁴



Use Correct Technique

Improper technique can lead to sharps injuries:

- Use instruments, rather than fingers, to grasp needles, load/unload suture and scalpels
- If required, one-handed recapping using the scoop method for hypodermic needles



Create a Neutral Zone

Protect yourself, co-workers, and patients:

- Limit certain areas for sharps only
- Define the area, allowing flexibility for emergency situations
- Allow one instrument at a time in the zone
- Openly communicate what, when, and how the neutral zone will work



Use Alternative Engineering Control Methods

- **Cutting:** electrocautery, ultrasonic scalpels
- **Suture:** blunt needles, stapling devices, adhesive strips, glues
- **Instruments:** blunt vs. sharp, protective caps on sharp instruments when not in use
- **Scalpels:** with safety shields

References:

1. Jagger J, Berguer R, Phillips EK, Parker G, Goma AE. Increase in sharps injuries in surgical settings versus nonsurgical settings after passage of national needlestick legislation. *Journal of the American College of Surgeons*. Apr 2010;210(4):496-502.
2. Association of Operating Room Nurses. AORN Guidance Statement: Sharps Injury Prevention in the Perioperative Setting. Denver: Association of Operating Room Nurses; 2018
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Stop Sticks Campaign. CDC Website. <https://www.cdc.gov/nora/councils/hcsa/stopsticks/postertemplates.html>. Updated on June 26, 2013. Accessed on December 15, 2020.
4. Berguer R, MD. 2004. Preventing Sharps Injuries in the Operating Room. *Jour Am Coll Surg*; 04. Pp. 462-467.