



Syringe Disposals and Injuries

Rationale:

To ensure schools safely manage:

- Discarded needles
- Needle stick injuries.

Aims:

Teachers and principals will:

- Be familiar with the school's disposal procedures for used needles
- Actively discourage students from picking up needles or syringes.

Note: Schools should have a sharps container for discarded needles, stored out of reach of staff, students and visitors. If an approved disposal container is not available a hard-wall container will be used as an alternative.

Implementation:

Equipment required:

- Single use gloves
- Tongs
- Plastic bags
- Approved disposal container.

Needle disposal:

This table describes how schools dispose of needles and syringes.

Step	Action
1	If the discarded syringe or needle is: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessible, continue with the disposal procedure• Not accessible:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mark the area so that others are not at risk- Supervise area- Contact the Syringe Disposal Helpline on 1800 552 355.
2	Put on single-use gloves.
3	Place the disposal container on the ground next to the syringe.
4	Using tongs, pick up the syringe from the middle keeping the sharp end away from yourself and place it in the disposal container, needle point down.

Note:

- Never try to recap a needle, even if the cap is also discarded.
 - Long metal tongs can be used to reach difficult to access places.
- 5 Repeat Step 4 each individual needle or syringe.
- 6 Screw the lid of the disposal unit on firmly.

- 7 Remove gloves and place them in a plastic bag. Seal the bag and dispose of it in a rubbish bin.
- 8 Wash hands in warm soapy water and dry thoroughly.
- 9 To dispose of the sharps disposal container, contact the:
 - Syringe Disposal Helpline on 1800 5523 355 for:
 - Advice about handling syringes.
 - The location of the nearest local council syringe program or public disposal bin.
 - Local general practitioner
 - Local hospital

Note: Disposal containers or syringes must not be put in normal waste disposal.

Treating needle stick injuries:

Step	Action
1	Flush the injured area with flowing water
2	Wash the affected part with warm soapy water, then pat dry
3	Cover the wound with waterproof dressing
4	Report the injury to the principal and on Edu Safe or CASES21
5	Ensure the injured person sees a doctor as soon as possible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Assessment of the risk- Treatment, if required.

An adult should accompany the student to the nearest doctor/medical centre.

Related policies:

- Duty of Care
- Health Education Approaches
- Infectious Diseases
- Major First Aid Kits

Related legislation:

- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- WorkSafe Victoria First Aid in the Workplace - Compliance Code 2008

Department resources:

- Drug education
- First aid requirements

References:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/pages/syringe.aspx>

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

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