

**ADVISORY 12.1: NEEDLESTICK, OTHER PERCUTANEOUS AND MUCOUS  
MEMBRANE EXPOSURES**

**POLICY**

UC Health Employee Health and Wellness Clinic (EH&W) will be responsible for epidemiological surveillance and management of all potential exposures to Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Hepatitis B and C by a needlestick, a body fluid splash, or a sharp injury from a source with known or suspected infection. EH&W will recommend and offer post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) in accordance with Public Health Service recommendations.

**PROCEDURE**

- A. Appropriate wound care should be implemented immediately by the employee or student, i.e., wash the injury site and apply antiseptic. If the exposure is mucous membrane (i.e., eyes), copious irrigation with tap water should be performed immediately for 15 minutes.
- B. An employee or student who sustains an injury with a needle or sharp object, or sustains a mucous membrane splash with blood or other body fluid must report the exposure IMMEDIATELY.
- C. It is imperative that exposures be reported **IMMEDIATELY**. If indicated, post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) should be started as soon as possible after the exposure.
- D. Source Patient: Whenever the patient, who is the source of the exposure (source patient) can be identified, the employee or their supervisor must notify UCH immediately at 513-585-8000 so that an HIV consent form is completed and required blood tests are ordered (if not already available). Required lab tests on the source patient include: HIV antibody (4<sup>th</sup> generation test) and Needlestick Profile I (includes Hepatitis B Surface Antigen (HBsAg), and Hepatitis C Antibody).

**Source Patient Consent**

Consent for HIV testing on source patients should be obtained in accordance with UC Health's policy on HIV testing. The physician who orders the tests (attending or resident physician) is responsible for appropriate pre- and post-test counseling with regards to HIV testing.

If the source patient is unknown, the employee should be evaluated for PEP and notified of any required follow-up lab work.

**E. Employee Exposures**

The employee must report the incident immediately to UC Health Employee Health and Wellness Clinic at 513-585-8000 when an exposure occurs. Blood will be drawn for the following tests: hepatic ALT, HIV antibody and Needlestick Profile II (includes Hepatitis B surface antigen, Hepatitis B surface antibody, and Hepatitis C antibody). Consent must be requested and obtained for HIV testing to be done. Appropriate counseling and treatment will be provided.

If the injury or exposure occurs at a location other than the UC Health, the employee must notify the UCH Employee Health and Wellness so that the source patient labs can be obtained.

All employees with exposures will be offered Hepatitis B vaccine unless previously known to be immune, and tetanus toxoid booster, if needed.

F. **Student Exposures**

The student notifies his/her department and the Employee Health Department at the facility where the exposure occurred so that the source patient labs can be obtained.

IF UHS IS NOT OPEN:

1. The student should call the Needlestick Hotline (513-584-STIX) immediately for reporting the incident, further instruction and follow-up information.
2. The student must go to the UC Health Emergency Room, if medically indicated, at the time of the incident.
3. If the injury or exposure occurs at an outlying campus (i.e., Blue Ash College or Clermont College), the student should seek medical treatment at the nearest hospital and notify UHS as soon as possible.
4. If the source patient is known to be HIV positive, hepatitis surface antigen positive (HBsAg) or hepatitis C antibody positive, the student should immediately go to the UC Health Emergency Room. The UHS physician on call may be contacted through the hospital operator (513-584-PAGE).

Treatment will be based on source patient results.