



STAY SHARP

when it comes to needlestick accidents. At EMPLOYERS® our claim professionals are trained to assist both you and your employee, by providing guidance and access to appropriate medical care.

Thankfully needlestick accidents are rare. But when they do happen, it can be stressful for the employee and the practice. EMPLOYERS can set your mind at ease. **We pay for your employee to have a confidential medical evaluation and testing as well as testing the source individual's blood to identify the presence of any blood borne pathogens.** We also provide post exposure blood testing and prophylaxis in compliance with CDC recommendations.

You can trust EMPLOYERS to provide fast and confidential access to care along with timely claims resolution. A workers compensation policy from EMPLOYERS can set everyone's mind at ease.

EMPLOYERS®

Don't get stuck with inadequate needlestick coverage. Every EMPLOYERS® plan includes Needlestick coverage with fast, appropriate care and claims resolution.

WHY IT MATTERS:

▶ **STICKS HAPPEN**

The CDC reports that nearly 400,000 needlestick injuries happen per year in the United States. It can happen to employees who regularly handle needles, like nurses and lab workers, but also to people who handle trash or just general office workers.

▶ **WHAT'S THE DANGER**

The chance of getting a disease from an accidental stick are fairly low, but they need to be tested every time. Dangers include HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C, most commonly, but also Syphilis, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, Varicella zoster, Epstein-Barr and many other less-known viruses.

▶ **PREVENTION IS THE BEST MEDICINE**

Most accidental sticks happen during injections, so proper training and technique are crucial. They also happen when a needle is taken apart for disposal and tossed, and when putting the cap back on. Improper disposal also places multiple people at risk. Have defined procedures, and train your staff to follow them, including: Go slowly, don't recap needles, and ALWAYS use a sharps container for disposal.

▶ **WHAT TO DO**

After an accidental stick, employees need to follow all CDC and in-office procedures for your practice. Then call the EMPLOYERS Injured Employee Hotline (IEH). After basic wound care, find out what you can about the person initially injected with the needle. EMPLOYERS needlestick coverage covers the cost of getting that person tested, too. And then get treated. Your doctor will assess your risk and provide an appropriate course of action.

▶ **WHAT'S COVERED**

EMPLOYERS needlestick coverage is comprehensive, covering blood tests for both the source patient and the employee who got stuck, as well as any follow up course of action.

Workers compensation insurance is about more than covering costs; it is also about ease of mind. EMPLOYERS needlestick coverage helps protect practices and employees when sticks happen.

For more information visit <https://www.employers.com/Needlestick>

NEEDLESTICK & SHARPS CHECKLIST

These kinds of accidents need to be taken seriously both before and after they happen. That means your business must have best practices in place to both prevent and successfully deal with accidents as they occur. The following checklist is based upon the advice of the CDC and HHS.

PREVENTION CHECKLIST

Thankfully, needle and sharps accidents are fairly rare. But good preparation beforehand can make them even rarer. Follow these steps:

- ✓ Have defined procedures for all needle and sharps usage within your practice area.
- ✓ Pay particular attention to procedures for injections and disposal.
- ✓ Don't recap needles because that increases chance for a stick.
- ✓ Make sure you have appropriate sharps disposal containers, even for mobile staff.
- ✓ Encourage staff to work slowly, because rushing leads to accidents.
- ✓ Avoid the use of needles where safe and effective alternatives are available.
- ✓ The CDC suggest Hepatitis B vaccinations for all employees who regularly use needles in their work.
- ✓ Ensure your workers' comp policy includes needlestick coverage.
- ✓ Communicate best practices to all appropriate staff, and schedule regular trainings.

AFTER A NEEDLESTICK

Unfortunately, sticks and cuts do happen. Even if the vast majority of these end up with no long-term impacts, your staff needs to follow CDC guidelines to ensure minimum harm. The following checklist combines CDC advice with EMPLOYERS® procedures.

- 1** After an accidental stick, employees need to follow all CDC and in-office procedures for your practice.
- 2** Make sure these are well-defined and that your employees are trained on them regularly.
- 3** Rinse and wash a needlestick area well with soap and running water. If a larger wound, treat appropriately.
- 4** Flush eyes, nose and mouth with water or saline in case of any splashes from the needle.
- 5** Find out what you can about the person injected with the needle first. This is particularly important if they possibly have HIV, hepatitis B or hepatitis C.
- 6** Call the EMPLOYERS Injured Employee Hotline (IEH) for initial triage.
- 7** Schedule blood tests for both the employee and the source patient (a signed authorization is required). EMPLOYERS workers' comp plans cover tests for both people.
- 8** Arrange for treatment and follow up with usual healthcare provider, who will assess risk and advise appropriate care.