ACTION TO BE TAKEN IN THE EVENT OF A NEEDLESTICK/SHARPS INJURY

A needlestick injury is an incident, which causes a hypodermic needle, blade (such as scalpel) or other sharp instrument to penetrate the skin. This is sometimes called a sharps or percutaneous injury. The following procedure would also be appropriate for “face splash” injuries, where blood or other body fluids make contact with the eyes, nose or mouth.

IMMEDIATE FIRST AID

If you suffer a needlestick injury:

- Encourage the wound to gently bleed, ideally under running water – do not suck the wound.
- Wash the site liberally with water and plenty of soap (do not scrub the wound).
- Dry the wound and cover it with a waterproof plaster or dressing.
- For eye/face splash injuries, irrigate the affected area with large quantities of water.
- Report the incident without delay to your line manager/supervisor.

Managers’ Actions:

The injured person’s line manager/supervisor will need to make an assessment on the risk of infection and decide if further medical attention may be required. Where a potential risk of infection is present for University staff members/postgraduate students, the manager/supervisor should contact the below for immediate advice:

**Occupational Health Advice Line**: 01273 555 666

Open 9.00am - 5.30pm, Monday to Friday

A referral to Occupational Health should be made by the line manager at the next available opportunity through the online portal: [https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/hr/wellbeing/referrals](https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/hr/wellbeing/referrals)

* new number as of 14th January 2019.
Outside of these hours, or in cases where a high risk of infection suggests that immediate medical attention is necessary, the injured person should attend their nearest Accident & Emergency Department.

Managers/supervisors should ensure that all needlestick injuries, whether treated in-house or externally, have been reported via the University’s online accident reporting system within 24 hours of the incident occurring: [https://air.shef.ac.uk/](https://air.shef.ac.uk/)

**What to do if your line manager is not available:**

If your line manager is not immediately contactable then you should contact the Departmental Safety Officer / Biosafety Officer with responsibility for the area where the injury occurred. If you do not know who this is, call Security Control on 4444 who will be able to advise you from the incident contact list.

The Departmental Safety Officer / Biosafety Officer should then liaise with the injured person’s manager/supervisor as soon as possible, to proceed with an Occupational Health referral as previously stated.

**Needlestick injuries involving undergraduate students or visitors:**

If the injured person is an undergraduate student or visitor, the supervising manager should assess the risk of infection as above and, if deemed appropriate, direct the injured person to either attend the nearest A&E department or contact their own GP for an urgent appointment.