

# First Aid Following a Blood/ Body Fluid Exposure

## Prevention:

### Never

- Resheath needles/razors
- Over fill a sharps bin (only to the 'fill' line)
- Dispose of sharps in the general waste
- Pass sharps from hand to hand
- Disassemble devices e.g. needle bar and needle dispose of as a complete unit
- Leave sharps boxes unsupervised.
- Never place sharps or sharp boxes in clinical/offensive waste bags.

### Always

- Keep your Hepatitis B vaccination up to date
- Dispose of needle at point of use
- Use a sharp box which complies with UN 3291 and BS7320 standards
- Close sharps box opening (temporary closure device) between uses
- Shut and lock box when full for disposal
- Dispose of sharps boxes as clinical waste for incineration only.
- Label sharp box with name of person/ premises and waste content.

## Steps to take following a blood/body fluid exposure:

**1**

Encourage bleeding where skin is punctured or broken.  
Do not suck the wound.

**2**

Wash thoroughly with mild liquid soap under running warm water.  
Do not use a scrubbing brush.

**3**

If eyes are involved, wash immediately with water for 5-10 minutes (use tap water, or sterile water if available).  
If the mouth is contaminated, rinse with plenty of water.

**4**

Any cuts/punctures should be covered with a waterproof plaster.

**5**

Where there is considerable contamination of unbroken skin, remove contaminated clothing and wash all affected areas with lots of water.

**6**

Seek medical advice at your local Emergency Department as prophylactic treatment (if required) should be given within one hour and no later than 72 hours.  
If known, give the details of the client whose needle was involved in the incident to the hospital.

**7**

Ensure that your manager is informed immediately of the incident so that an incident form can be completed.

**The priority is to seek advice/ medical attention immediately, at a local Emergency Department, ideally within one hour of the injury occurring.**