



Example procedures for cleaning and disposal of body fluid spillages and sharps in public areas of the University

Introduction

Handling body fluids, discarded syringes and needles could potentially lead to exposure to pathogens such as HIV or hepatitis viruses through sharps injuries or through skin cuts or splashes into eyes. Managers should provide instructions and training to staff to enable them to carry out this work safely and this will help you to develop your spillage and sharps safety procedures.

Clean up kit

You can buy or make up your own clean up kits which might contain the following equipment. Follow the manufacturer's instructions when using equipment and chemicals.

- Robust sharps resistant gloves
- Disposable nitrile gloves (several pairs)
- Suitable protective clothing or disposable polythene aprons
- Spectacles, goggles or face shield
- Long forceps for handling sharps
- Scoop and spatula for uplifting solid items and used granules
- Paper towels
- Disinfectant spray
- Granules for absorbing spillages
- Yellow sharps disposal container and heavy gauge yellow plastic bags

- Robust container in which to transport yellow bags once they contain waste

Clean up method

Always assume that body fluids or sharps may contain harmful pathogens and handle them with caution to reduce risks of infection. This is an **example** clean up method which can be used or modified to suit local arrangements.

1. **DISCOVERY:** Isolate the affected area and avoid direct contact with the body fluids or sharps.
2. **PROTECT YOURSELF:** Put on your protective clothing and equipment like apron, specs and gloves immediately. If the gloves become damaged in the operation replace them immediately with clean gloves. Sharps resistant gloves can offer a valuable additional protection if used.
3. **ASSESSMENT:** Carefully assess the affected area before beginning to identify the areas that need cleaning and ensure that there are no additional syringes or needles that were initially overlooked.
4. **PICKING UP SYRINGES, NEEDLES AND SOLID OBJECTS:** Put yellow sharps waste container down on surface near to the hazards and always take sharps waste container to sharps, not the other way round. Do not handle sharps with your hands. Pick up sharps using the long safety forceps. Keep the sharps at a distance to protect yourself and do not hold sharps bin. Drop the sharp into sharps container. You can use a scoop and spatula provided in the kit to lift solid non sharp objects and place them



directly into the sharps disposal container. Do not overfill the sharps container. After use decontaminate the implements by spraying with the disinfectant.

5. **BODY FLUID SPILLAGES:**

- a. **ABSORB:** Spread the absorbent granules over the spilled body fluids.
- b. **REMOVE GRANULES:** Collect with the scoop and spatula and discard into a yellow bag. Do not overfill the bag.
- c. **DISINFECT:** After use spray the scoop and spatula with disinfectant and leave for a few minutes then rinse off and dry with paper towels. Place the paper towels in the yellow bag. If the scoop and spatula are very heavily contaminated, or if the material being removed is thought to be of high hazard, place these in the yellow bag for disposal with the other waste without disinfecting or cleaning them. Spray the contaminated site with disinfectant and leave for a few minutes before mopping up with the paper towels. Dispose of the paper towels in the yellow disposal bag.

6. **REMOVE APRON and GLOVES:** Dispose of used gloves and aprons etc into the yellow disposal bag.

7. **CLEAN HANDS:** Wash hands with soap and water or use disinfectant wipes.

8. **FINAL DISPOSAL:** The yellow disposal container and bag should be sealed up and carried in the robust container to a safe storage location. Waste cannot be disposed through the domestic waste stream but must be disposed through the waste disposal contractor that has been appointed by the University for the disposal of biological waste. Information on this is available on the biological waste section of SEPS web site.



If the sharps disposal container is not full it may be transported to and stored in a safe place for future use. Its final disposal should be arranged through the University appointed contractor for biological waste

Additional guidance on [biological safety](#) can be found in SEPS website.