

Controls for Laboratory Safety

Engineering Controls

Sharps Containers

Sharps should always be placed in the proper sharps containers! These containers should be:

- Made out of hard plastic
- Designed for the storage of used sharps
- Labeled with the Universal Biohazard Symbol
- Replace when the manufacturer's line fill line is reached

Mechanical Pipettes

These are used for transferring human blood or body fluids. **MOUTH PIPETTING IS PROHIBITED!**

Containment Devices

These are used for the manipulation of blood and body fluids. These also can be used for both sterile cultures and pathogen work.

Chemical and Mechanical Filters

Be sure that all vacuum lines are protected with either an inline filter or vacuum trap.

Needleless System

A device that does not use needles for:

- The collection or withdrawal of human body fluids after initial venous or arterial access is established
- The administration of medication or fluids
- Any other procedure involving the potential for occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens due to percutaneous injuries from contaminated sharps

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Work Practice Controls

Work Areas

Must be:

- Cleaned and decontaminated:
 - Daily with an appropriate disinfectant
 - After contact with blood or OPIM
- Labeled with a Biohazard sticker if used for storage or processing of human blood or OPIM

Hand Washing

Wash your hands as soon as possible in the following situations:

- After removal of gloves or other protective clothing
- After direct contact with human blood or OPIM
- Before:
 - Leaving work area
 - Eating or drinking

Information for supervisors: If liquid soap and water are not available for hand washing use, then antiseptic paper towels or antiseptic hand cleaning lotion may be used. However, you **must** wash your hands with soap and water as soon as practical.

A complete copy of the UAB Medical Waste Management Plan can be located [here](#).

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Additional Controls

In the lab, do NOT

- Eat, drink, or smoke
- Store food or drink
- Apply cosmetics or lip balm
- Handle contact lenses

Before Eating

- Remove all potentially contaminated protective clothing
- Wash your hands before you leave the work area

Aerosol Generation

Aerosol generation should be minimized. Potential aerosol generating procedures can include: sonicating, grinding, slicing, centrifuging, and performing any other procedure which could potentially cause splashing or create aerosol droplets.

All aerosol procedures must be performed in a Biosafety Cabinet or other containment system if aerosols are likely to be generated including: specimen handling, packaging of specimens for transport, processing, culturing. If processes cannot be performed in a Biosafety Cabinet, please contact OH&S at (205) 934-2487.

Medical Waste Containers

These containers must be leak proof, unbreakable, labeled with the Universal Biohazard Symbol, and have the ability to close.

