

HANDLING OF SHARPS

You may have heard of accidents arising from inappropriate handling of sharps. These may include:

- Cleaner's hand pricked by used needles disposed of in a waste bag during waste collection
- Student or researcher's hand pricked by needles during laboratory classes or experiments
- Laboratory user's hand cut or pricked by sharps left on the open lab benches during housekeeping or retrieving of items

Sharps injuries can lead to significant injury, especially if the needle is contaminated with pathogenic agents or biological toxins. Such accident is most often preventable if proper safety measures are practised.

Examples of unsafe conditions and practices



Used needles left in the open



Used sharp disposed of in the general waste bin

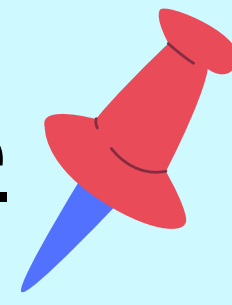


Recycle the use of the sharp bin



Overfilled sharp box and without cover lid in position

Safety pointers to take note



a. Never leave any sharps lying around on the table tops where needle injury may occur.

b. Know where and how to dispose of sharps generated from your work safely. Ask if you are not sure.

c. Do not dispose any sharps into the general waste bin or in any bag.



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d. All sharps must be collected in an appropriate puncture-proof sharps container for waste disposal. Fill the containers to $\frac{3}{4}$ full without any sharps sticking out of the container.



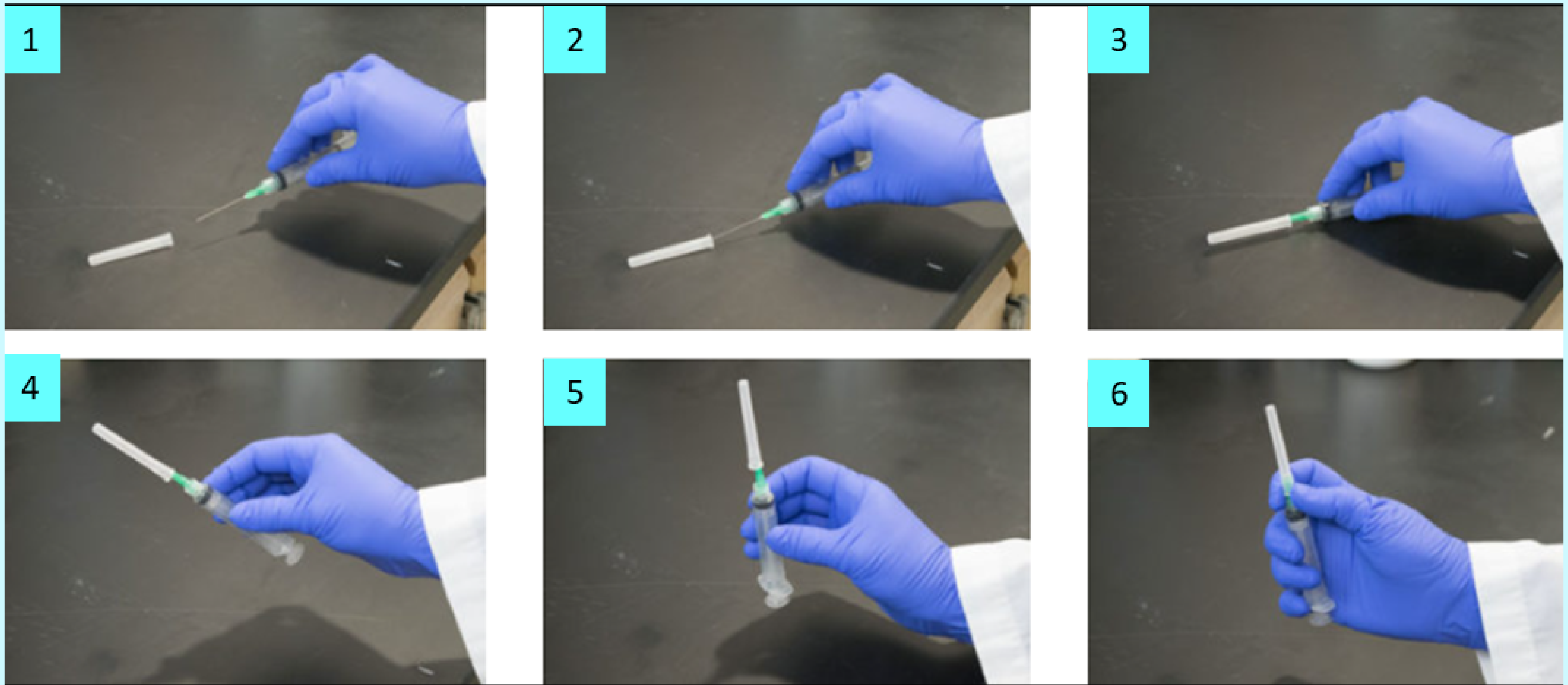
e. Make sure the lid is properly installed before putting the container into use. Permanently close the lid when is $\frac{3}{4}$ full for disposal purposes.

f. An appropriate sharps container must be kept close to the point of use to avoid walking around with contaminated sharps.

Be responsible. Do not endanger other people by your actions.

Recapping needle

- a. Do not recap needles as there is always a potential for a needle accident.
- b. Unless where it is really necessary, use the single handed scoop method.



1. Place the cap on a level surface
2. Slowly slide the needle into the cap
3. Slide the entire needle section into the cap
4. Gently scoop up the cap
5. Allow the cap to cover the needle with the needle facing vertically upwards
6. Carefully use your index finger and thumb to secure the cap in place (you may also press the cap against an inanimate object to help fix it in place). Never place your fingers near the needle tip

