

SLSQ Procedure

Subject: Sharps Procedure	Department: Lifesaving
Procedure No: LSP010	Version No: 1
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Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to provide all SLSQ members with the knowledge and understanding of what to do when they come across a 'sharps' item & best practices on how to manage the hazard.

Scope

This procedure applies to all SLSQ members, Lifeguards, and staff.

Definitions

ADIS: Alcohol and Drug Information Service

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If You Find a Needle and Syringe

When on the beach or outside of patrol, if you find an unsafely discarded needle or syringe, refer to the below dot points:

- Do not put your hands in any hidden or hard to access places (e.g., drainpipes, toilets or thick bushes);
- Do NOT attempt to recap the needle;
- Use a sharps container to dispose of the needle or syringe. If a sharps container isn't immediately available, find a rigid walled, puncture resistant, sealable container e.g., a plastic bottle.
- Find and put on latex/rubber gloves if possible;
- Bring the container and place on ground beside to the needle/syringe;
- Do not hold the container upright in your hands as you are disposing of the needle/syringe;
- Pick up the needle/syringe by the middle of the barrel keeping the sharp end facing away from you at all times;

- Place the needle/syringe in the container sharp end first; and securely close the lid, holding the container at the top;
- Remove gloves (if appropriate and wash hands with running water and soap);
- Place the sealed container into your nearest Needle and Syringe Program (NSP) for disposal as medical waste;
- Other items that have come into contact with blood should be disposed of in the same container as the used needle/syringe, or placed into double plastic bags and then into rubbish, or taken to a NSP for disposal;
- Advise children to inform an adult if they find unsafely disposed of needles/syringes; and
- Call the Queensland Clean Needle Hotline, 1800 NEEDLE (1800 633 353) to report any incidence of unsafely discarded needles and syringes.

Needle Stick Injury

If you or someone you are treating has had a needle stick injury, you must follow the below steps:

1. Wash away the blood or body fluid with soap and water for at least 30secs;
2. If the eyes are contaminated, rinse eyes while open with water or saline;
3. If blood gets into the mouth, spit it out and then repeatedly rinse with water;
4. Do not squeeze or rub area;
5. Cover site with a band aid or dressing;
6. Refer the person immediately to a doctor or hospital emergency department; and
7. Ensure the safe disposal of the sharp (Ideally a sharps container, do not take it with you)

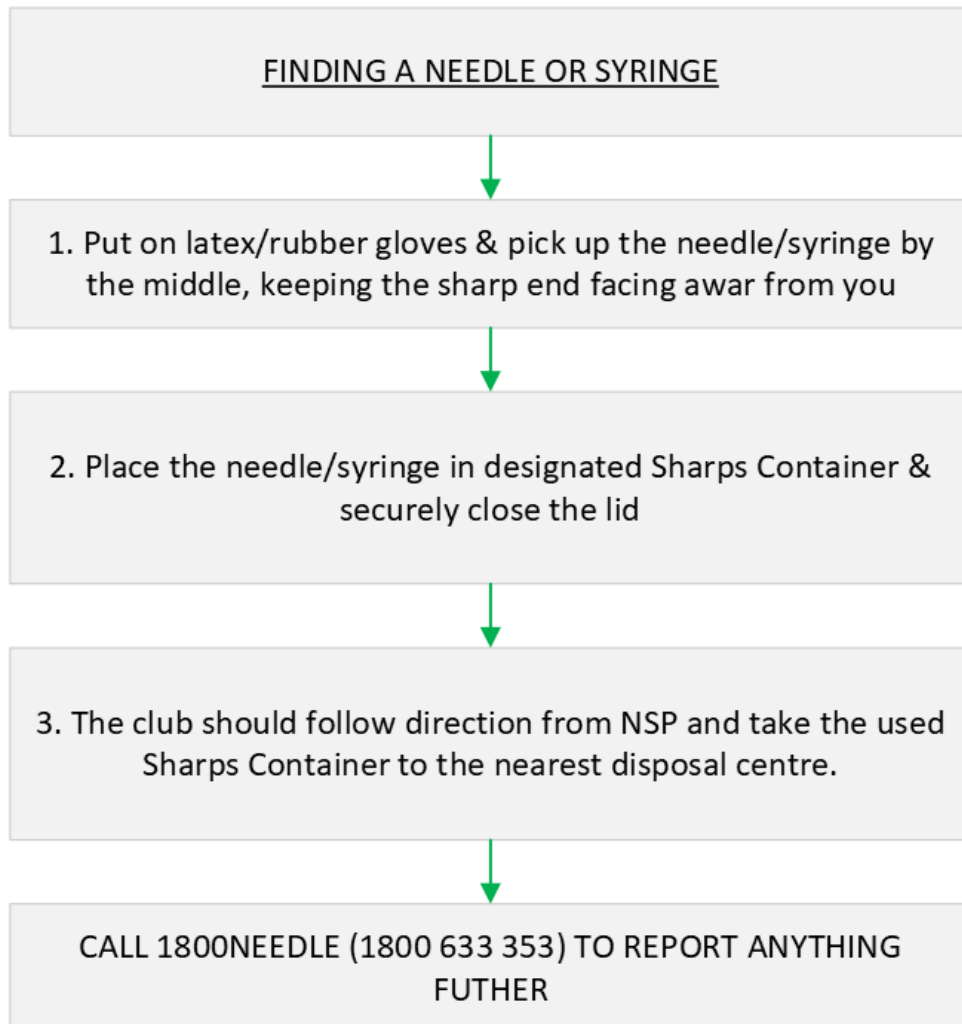
Don't panic, the risk of catching a serious infection is very low as these viruses do not survive for long outside the body.

Related procedure instruments

The Queensland Clean Needle Helpline (1800 NEEDLE/1800 633 353) is available to access information regarding needle stick injury, report incidents of unsafely discarded needles and syringes and to find out where and how used sharps can be safely disposed of. This service is available 24 hours, seven days a week, and is run by the ADIS.

Flowcharts

Finding a Needle or Syringe



Needle Stick Injury

