



## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY FACT SHEET: BIOLOGICAL EXPOSURE



### Biological Exposure:

Potential exposures include needle sticks, animal bites, aerosol exposures, and other incidents potentially resulting in disease from a biological agent.

**Biohazardous Agent:** refers to an agent that is biological in nature and has the capacity to produce deleterious effects upon biological organisms. Biohazardous agents include, but are not limited to; bacteria, fungi, viruses, rickettsiae, Chlamydia, prion, parasites, recombinant products, allergens, cultured human and animal cells and the potentially biohazardous agents these cells may contain, infected clinical specimens, tissue from experimental animals, plant viruses, bacteria and fungi, toxins, and other biohazardous agents as defined by State and Federal regulations.

### Common Routes of Exposure:

- Sharps injuries: contaminated hypodermic needles, razor blades and contaminated glassware.
- Aerosols: dropped cultures, dropped animal cages, broken tubes in centrifuges, mixing procedures
- Non-intact Skin: skin with micro abrasions and gloves were not worn or poor hand washing, cuts not covered
- Mucous Membrane: Splashes to eyes, nose or mouth
- Ingestion: Eating or drinking in contaminated areas (example: labs), not washing hands after wearing gloves and then handling food or tobacco products, applying lip balm or chewing gum in contaminated areas.

### Exposure Procedures:

1. Stop work and immediately begin washing injury/exposed area with warm soapy water for 15 minutes.
2. If exposure is to eyes, use eye wash to irrigate eyes for 15 minutes. If only one eye was exposed, take care not to contaminate the other eye.
3. Seek medical attention at the University Health Services - Urgent Care Department as soon as possible (before 2 hours have elapsed). 577-5000. Tell them what you were exposed to and bring any information that you may have on the agent.
4. If injury is severe, call 911 from a land-line. This will connect you with UMPD. UMPD will call for an ambulance and will dispatch help to you until the ambulance arrives. If you use a cell phone, calling 911 puts you in contact with a State Police dispatcher at a Massachusetts relay center. You must tell them: *UMass -Amherst*, building and room number.
5. Report the incident to your supervisor and the Biological Safety Services Manager at EH&S (545-7293)
6. File a Notice of Injury Report



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