

**Employers** of healthcare workers should implement the use of improved engineering controls to reduce needlestick injuries, including:

- Eliminate the use of needles where safe and effective alternatives are available.
- Implement the use of devices with safety features and evaluate their use to determine which are most effective and acceptable.

Needlestick injuries can best be reduced when the use of improved engineering controls is incorporated into a comprehensive program involving workers. Employers should implement the following program elements:

- Analyze needlestick and other sharps-related injuries in your workplace to identify hazards and injury trends.
- Set priorities and strategies for prevention by examining local and national information about risk factors for needlestick injuries and successful intervention efforts.
- Ensure that healthcare workers are properly trained in the safe use and disposal of needles.
- Modify work practices that pose a needlestick injury hazard to make them safer.
- Promote safety awareness in the work environment.
- Establish procedures for and encourage the reporting and timely follow up of **all** needlestick and other sharps-related injuries.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of prevention efforts and provide feedback on performance.

**Healthcare workers** should take the following steps to protect themselves and their fellow workers from needlestick injuries:

- Avoid the use of needles where safe and effective alternatives are available.
- Help your employer select and evaluate devices with safety features.
- Use devices with safety features provided by your employer.
- Avoid recapping needles.
- Plan for safe handling and disposal before beginning any procedure using needles.
- Dispose of used needles promptly in appropriate sharps disposal containers.
- Report all needlestick and other sharps-related injuries promptly to ensure that you receive appropriate follow up care.
- Tell your employer about hazards from needles that you observe in your work environment.
- Participate in bloodborne pathogen training and follow recommended infection prevention practices, including hepatitis B vaccination.