

“Sharps” include needles, syringes, and lancets used for checking blood glucose levels.

People at the greatest risk of suffering a needle stick injury include sanitation and sewage treatment plant workers, janitors, housekeepers, and children.

Sharps are used to treat:

- ◆Allergies
- ◆Cancer
- ◆Erectile Dysfunction
- ◆HIV/AIDS
- ◆Migraines
- ◆Osteoporosis
- ◆Arthritis
- ◆Diabetes
- ◆Hepatitis
- ◆Infertility
- ◆Multiple Sclerosis
- ◆Psoriasis

One out of every 20 people in the United States has diabetes and uses an average of two sharps daily.

Needle stick injury victims suffer anxiety, depression, disease monitoring, and possible long-term infectious disease treatment.



For More Information Contact:

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Waste Management and Radiological Protection, Medical Waste Regulatory Program at **517-284-6594**.

To learn if there is a sharps collection program in your area, contact the DEQ Environmental Assistance Center at **800-662-9278** or visit the Medical Waste Regulatory Program's Web site at www.michigan.gov/deqmedwaste.

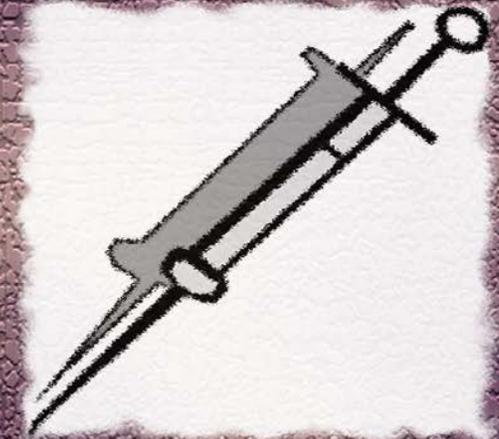


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The Point is . . .



Needles Hurt!



Health officials estimate nearly 24 million Americans have diabetes. In Michigan, 2009 survey statistics estimated 693,000 adults (age 18 and over) have diabetes.* Diabetics use syringes, needles, and lancets to administer home health care. In addition, many patients with cancer, arthritis, and other chronic diseases generate sharps as a medical waste with their self-administered home health care.

These “sharps,” if not disposed of in puncture-resistant containers, can:

- ◆ Injure waste haulers.
- ◆ Increase the risk of infection.
- ◆ Pollute our environment.

NOTICE: Under Michigan’s littering law, it is illegal for a person to dispose of sharps improperly.
(MCL 324.8905[2])

Home users who produce medical waste can help prevent injury, infection, and pollution by following these simple steps:

- ◆ Contact their local health department, county waste authority, or household hazardous waste collection program to see if they will collect sharps for safe and proper

*Source: Michigan Department of Community Health 2009 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System data and 2008 population data.

disposal. You can also check the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Medical Waste Regulatory Program’s Web site where a list of community service collection programs is maintained by county. The Web site can be found at www.michigan.gov/deqmedwaste.

- ◆ Identify a pharmacy, physician, dentist, veterinarian, health clinic, or a hospital that will accept your sharps and properly dispose of them with their sharps.

NOTICE: Under Michigan’s Medical Waste Regulatory Act, these facilities must ensure safe disposal of their medical waste.

- ◆ Contact a medical waste collection company and see if they will accept your sharps waste. A list of collection companies can be found on the Medical Waste Regulatory Program’s Web site listed above.
- ◆ Contract with a U.S. Postal Service approved mail-back service. These companies will provide you with containers and directions on packaging your sharps waste so they can be returned to the company through the U.S. mail. A list of these companies can be obtained from the Coalition for Safe Community Needle Disposal at

(800) 643-1643 or visit the Web site at www.safeneedledisposal.org.

- ◆ Purchase a product that allows you to destroy needles at home by burning, melting or cutting off the needle - making it safe to throw in the garbage. You can obtain a list of companies that make home needle destruction devices from the Coalition for Safe Community Needle Disposal, phone number and Web site address listed above.



Do not place sharps in a recyclable plastic or glass container and send them to a recycling center.

Do not let small children handle or play with sharps containers.

Do not flush needles, syringes, and lancets down the toilet.

Do not discard needles or lancets in the hotel, airline, or cruise line trash when traveling. Ask if a sharps container is available or package the used sharps in a puncture resistant container and bring them home with you for proper disposal.