

HYPODERMIC SYRINGES AND NEEDLES

Is a prescription required for hypodermic needles or syringes?

No. A prescription is not required for the purchase of hypodermic needles or syringes. But the retailer, at the time of sale, must be satisfied that the device will be used for the legal use intended.¹

Are there special requirements for disposal of hypodermic needles and syringes?

Yes. “Sharps waste” includes hypodermic needles, syringe IV tubing with needles attached, scalpel blades and lancets that have been removed from the original sterile package.² See MEDICAL WASTE for disposal requirements.

Must a physician who has employees who may have occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens through needlestick or sharps injuries take special precautions to reduce the health risk to employees?

Yes. Regulations have been promulgated under the federal Occupational Health and Safety Act (OSHA) and under the Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act (WISHA) requiring employers who have employees who face possible occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens through needlestick or sharps injuries to adopt specific written exposure control plans to eliminate or minimize the risk of such exposure. Details of the required bloodborne pathogen exposure control plans under OSHA can be found at 29 C.F.R. § 1910.1030 and under WISHA at WAC 296-823-11010.

¹ RCW 70.115.050.

² WAC 480-70-041.