



Needle Recapping Best Practices

Recapping of needles is discouraged, as it can result in accidental needlestick injuries and can lead to exposure to hazardous chemicals and infectious biological agents. However, if recapping cannot be avoided, there are measures that can be taken to do so safely.

One-Handed Scoop Method:

Step 1: Place the cap on the desk or other flat surface with something firm to “push” the needle cap against.

Step 2: Holding the syringe with the needle attached in one hand, slip the needle into the cap without using the other hand to touch the cap.

Step 3: Push the capped needle against a firm object to “seat” the cap onto the needle firmly using only one hand.



Place cap on hard flat surface.
Slide syringe needle into cap.



Scoop cap up with syringe
needle so that cap is sitting
on needle.



Using a hard flat surface,
press cap onto needle until
cap snaps into place.

Needle Recapping Devices:

These devices contain a hole in the center that holds needle caps and allows for single-hand uncapping and recapping. They must be securely mounted on a solid surface.



Additional Guidelines:

- ❖ The use of needles and syringes should be restricted to procedures for which there is no alternative.
- ❖ Do not leave uncapped needles on work surfaces; instead, place uncapped needles in a rigid tray during procedures and transportation.
- ❖ Blunt cannulas or safer needle devices, such as retractable devices and needle locking mechanisms, should be used whenever possible.
- ❖ Shearing or breaking of needles is prohibited.
- ❖ Use disposable needle locking syringes and other engineered protection systems; use needleless systems whenever possible.
- ❖ Needles and syringes should never be used as a substitute for pipettes.
- ❖ Used disposable needles and syringes must be placed in a conveniently located sharps disposal container and discarded as infectious or hazardous waste, depending on the source of contamination.
- ❖ Keep needles away from fingers and other body parts. Use extreme caution and be alert when handling sharps. Avoid distractions and keep sight of the needle at all times.
- ❖ Ensure that animals are restrained when using needles on animals and be on the alert for any unexpected movements.

Questions? Contact EHS at safety@andrew.cmu.edu