

## Laboratory Safety Guidelines

Although there are certain hazards present in the medical laboratory, it is possible to make the laboratory a safe working environment. Each laboratory worker must agree to observe all safety rules posted or unposted which the instructor requires. No set of rules can cover all the hazards that may be present. However, several general rules are listed below:

1. NO eating, drinking, smoking, gum chewing or applying makeup is allowed in the laboratory.
2. Dress appropriately when working in the lab
  - a. Avoid wearing chains, bracelets, or other loose hanging jewelry.
  - b. Tie long hair up or back to avoid contact with hazards, for example, chemicals, equipment, or organisms.
  - c. Wear closed toe shoes
3. Use appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
  - a. Wear a fluid resistant laboratory coat / gown. Remove your lab coat before leaving the laboratory.
  - b. Wear gloves when handling blood, body fluids, or hazardous chemicals.
  - c. Wear eye protection or use a counter top acrylic shield when working with strong chemicals or anytime splashes are likely to occur.
4. Wash hands after removing gloves, when completing laboratory procedures, before leaving the lab, & at any other time necessary.
5. Use universal precautions when handling patient & biological specimens, including blood & diagnostic products made from human blood.
6. Maintain your work area
  - a. Clean & disinfect work area before & after laboratory procedures & any other time necessary.
  - b. Keep your work area neat and organized.
  - c. Wipe up spills promptly & use the appropriate clean up procedure for the type of spill.
7. Discard all contaminated materials into an appropriate, labeled, biohazard container.
  - a. A special rigid, puncture-proof container must be used for disposal of sharps such as needles & lancets.
  - b. Contaminated items that would puncture a biohazard bag are disposed of in the biohazard boxes on the counter-tops. (Glass slides, Glass pipets, broken contaminated glass)
  - c. All other contaminated waste requiring biohazard disposal is disposed of in the biohazard bags on the counter-tops
8. Discard any uncontaminated broken glassware into cardboard containers designated for broken glass.
  - a. Do not use bare hands to pick up broken glass; use a broom or brush & dustpan.
9. When using laboratory equipment
  - a. Follow the manufacturer and instructor's directions.
  - b. Report any broken or frayed cords, exposed electrical wires, or other damage to equipment.
10. Discuss any safety concerns or questions you may have with your instructor.
11. Report any accident to the instructor immediately. Fill out an accident report form.

Reference: *Basic Medical Laboratory Techniques*, 4th. ed., 2000  
Norman Walters, Barbara Estridge, Anna Reynolds, Delmar publishers.

## SAFETY AGREEMENT FORM

*Please initial the items below:*

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that while performing procedures & techniques in the clinical laboratory, I may be exposed to blood & body fluids that have the potential for transmitting infectious agents such as hepatitis & HIV (human immunodeficiency) viruses.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have been instructed in the proper use of protective measures & universal (or standard) precautions when handling blood and body fluid specimens.

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree to follow all safety rules & regulations as required by the instructor, including the rules listed in the laboratory manual

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree to:

1. Come to class prepared & ready to practice good safety techniques in the lab.
2. Routinely use appropriate barrier protection to prevent skin & mucous membrane exposure when working with blood & body fluids.
3. Use appropriate protective equipment & practice universal precautions when handling biological specimens.

*Please sign, date, & return to the instructor prior to the next laboratory.*

Signature indicates agreement with above statements. Agreement is valid for 1 year following date of signature. Agreement applies to all UWM Biomedical Science Laboratories.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
*(please print)*

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

*Instructor: All students must complete form before participating in laboratory activities.*