

Imperial College London

Obtaining medical help after a
hazardous laboratory exposure

to what have you been exposed?

human blood, serum or tissue 1	human pathogen 2	genetically modified organism 3	bite or scratch from animal 4	chemical 5	biological toxin 6	laser 7	ionising radiation 8	Occupational Health clinics 9
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Significant Exposure

Inoculation, cut from contaminated sharp, contamination of broken skin or splash into mouth, eye or nose

Source of help

1. Campus OH clinic or local A&E if closed
2. College OH Service

Speed

Within 1 hour

Comments

If the wound is sufficient to require medical treatment beyond simple first aid, go to A&E first.
Take any information available on the source of the material: donor, supplier, antibody or other virology data (negative tests results are as important as positives).
If the donor is traceable, the treating OH Service may wish to contact the donor to arrange to test them, in confidence, for infection with blood borne virus.

human
blood,
serum or
tissue

Significant Exposure

Various (risk assessment should specify). Inoculation or mucosal splash should *always* be regarded as significant. Exposure to aerosol may be significant

Source of help

1. College OH Service, South Kensington.
2. Local A&E if out-of-hours & same day assessment required

Speed

Same day— next work day (*see comments*)

Comments

For most exposures immediate treatment to prevent infection is not necessary. Follow-up to monitor for infection will be needed but can begin the next working day and will be carried out by the **College** OH Service.

Where post-exposure prophylaxis may be needed, then the medical assessment should be the same day.

If seeking help from A&E, take a copy of the risk assessment (DP1) or emergency treatment protocol if one exists

Significant Exposure

Various (risk assessment should specify). Inoculation or mucosal splash should *always* be regarded as significant. Exposure to aerosol may be significant

Source of help

College OH Service, South Kensington

Speed

By next work day

Comments

For most GMO exposures immediate treatment to prevent infection is not necessary, or possible. Follow-up to monitor for signs of infection will be needed but can begin the next working day. It will be carried out by the **College** OH Service.

genetically
modified
organism

Significant Exposure

Breach of skin: puncture wound or bleeding

Source of help

1. Local A&E department
2. College OH Service

Speed

Immediate *or* same day *or* report only, dependant on circumstances

Comments

Immediate A&E for major allergic reaction (collapse or difficulty breathing)

Same day A&E for wounds sufficient to require a dressing or for rat bites over finger joints.

Same day College OH Service assessment for bites from animal infected with human pathogen

Report lesser allergic reactions via College accident reporting procedure

bite or
scratch
from
animal

Significant Exposure

Skin contamination, ingestion, inhalation or splash into mouth, eye or nose

Source of help

1. Local First Aider
2. A&E or College Health Centre, Princes Gardens (SKen only)

Speed

Within 1 hour for some exposures (*see comments*) Wash immediately & complete 1st aid before seeking medical help.

Comments

The need for medical help will depend on the specific chemical involved & nature of exposure.

Attend A & E for: all eye splashes; visible skin damage; any inhalational exposure sufficient to cause initial breathing difficulty; ingestion or extensive contamination of chemicals with 'toxic' risk phrases (**R22-R28**)

If seeking help from the College Health Centre, phone before going.

Significant Exposure

Inoculation, ingestion, contamination of broken skin

Source of help

1. College OH Service
2. Local A&E department

Speed

Within 1 hour

Comments

A&E for any symptoms. Take the risk assessment or safety data sheet (MSDS) for the material.

Otherwise, contact the **College** OH Service by phone in the first instance to discuss & assess the risk.

Give details of:

- The incident
- Substance(s) involved
- Risk assessment or MSDS for the material.

Significant Exposure

Any flash into the eye from a Class 3B or Class 4 laser.

Source of help

Western Eye Hospital, 171 Marylebone Road, NW1 5YE.
Tel: 020 3312 6666

Speed

Same day

Comments

Laser burns require an urgent specialist ophthalmological opinion. The eye hospital has a specialist 24 hour A&E department for assessment and treatment of eye injuries.

Retinal burns are usually painless. Seek urgent assessment after *any* perceived flash event or sudden visual loss.

Significant
Exposure

Ingestion, inhalation, inoculation, absorption, contamination of skin, exposure to radio-nuclides, beams etc

Source
of help

Phone the College RPA or one of the RPOs for advice. If not available phone the Health Protection Agency (HPA)

Speed

Same day

Comments

If incident/accident involves a wound sufficient to require medical treatment beyond simple first aid, go to A&E first. Take any information available on the source material inc. nuclide, activity, compound and form (solid, liquid or gas).

College Radiation Protection Adviser: 07764 959 682

College RPOs: 07711 684 746 or 07725 159 734

HPA Radiation Protection Division (Oxford): 01235 831 600

Ionising
Radiation

OH Departments	Telephone	Location	Hours
College	(020 759) 49401	Level 4, Sherfield Building, South Kensington campus	9:00-5:00
Hammersmith	(020 331) 37010	2 nd Floor, Hammersmith House	9:00-5:00
Charing Cross	(020 331) 37010	4 th Floor, West Wing, CC Hospital	9.00-5.00 (limited service)
Chelsea & Westminster	(020 759) 49401	Level 4, Sherfield Building, South Ken.	9:00-5:00
St Marys	(020 7886) 6799	Praed Street, Basement of Mary Stanford Wing, St Mary's Hospital	8:00-4:00 (limited service)
Harefield	01895 828 721	Harefield Hospital	9:00-5:00
Northwick Park	020 8869 2580	Level 5BB, Admin Block	9:00-4:00

Notes

1. **The College OH Service is primary source of OH support for all campuses.** Hospital OH Departments only provide emergency assistance for exposures to clinical materials (blood, serum, human tissue).
2. Occupational Health departments do not always have a physician or OH nurse present throughout their opening hours. Phone before attending.
3. There are A&E departments at Charing Cross, Hammersmith, Chelsea & Westminster & St Mary's hospitals

NB all accidents must also be reported to the College Safety Department.

**OH contact
information**