

# Health Risks from Used Needles and Condoms

If you handle a used needle or condom properly, there is no health risk.

Teach children never to touch condoms or needles that they find, and to ask an adult for help.

## Dispose of used needles safely

- Don't touch used needles with your bare hands. Wear disposable gloves or washable rubber gloves.
- Use tongs to pick up the needle.
- Put the needle in a container that cannot be punctured by the needle. A plastic milk jug or large plastic pop bottle with a screw-on lid will do. (The best container is a "sharps container" which is made for used needles. A sharps container is hard-sided and there is less risk of the needle poking through the container.)
- **Take the container to the needle. Don't carry the needle to the container.**
- Do not hold the container when you put the needle into it. Close the container with a lid.
- Put the container into a garbage can that children cannot get at. Do not put it into a recycling bin.
- Wash your hands with soap and warm water.

## Dispose of used condoms safely

- Wear disposable gloves or washable rubber gloves.
- Pick up the condom and put the condom in a plastic bag.
- Put the bag into a garbage can that children cannot get at. Do not put it into a recycling bin.
- Remove and dispose of disposable gloves; wash rubber gloves.
- Wash your hands with soap and warm water.

## Sharps Containers

School Board staff should contact their Safety and Health Department for more information on how to get and handle sharps containers. Child care providers can get hard-sided sharps containers at most drug stores and there may be a charge. **Drug stores will accept sealed, used sharps containers for disposal, at no charge.**

## Pick-up of Discarded Needles

In Vancouver and Richmond, there are programs to arrange for pick-up of discarded needles.

**Vancouver:** call the Needle Pick-up Hotline at (604) 657-6561 or email: [needlevan@phs.ca](mailto:needlevan@phs.ca)

**Richmond:** call the City Works Yard at (604) 270-8721

For other areas within Vancouver Coastal Health, please contact your local public health office for further guidance. See contact information page 4.