



STERI•FACTS

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT SHARPS CONTAINER

NIOSH

The National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health (NIOSH) has developed a document, "Selecting, Evaluating and Using Sharps Disposal Containers," which presents comprehensive guidelines for selecting sharps containers and evaluating their efficacy as part of an overall needlestick injury prevention plan. Within this document, NIOSH has clearly described sharps container design elements that contribute to healthcare worker (HCW) risk reduction.

These elements include:

Functionality

- Puncture, leak and impact resistant
- Appropriate size and design to accommodate the largest sharps used
- Secure closure mechanism

Visibility

- Visible and recognizable with proper biohazard warning label
- Opening completely visible and clear before using
- Fill status visible prior to use

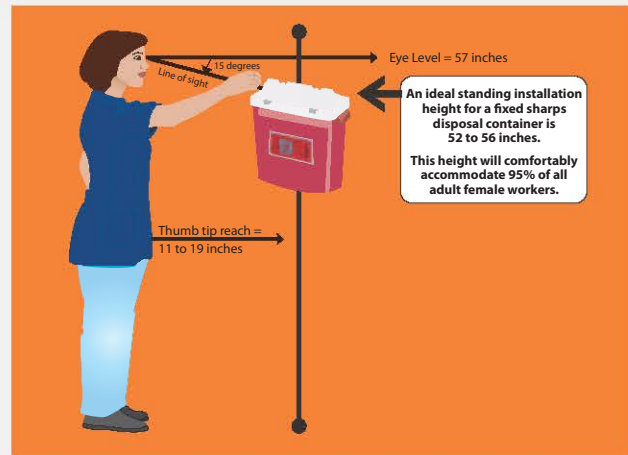
Accommodation

- Ease of storage and assembly
- Intuitive and easy to use
- Promotes one-hand disposal
- Safe mounting system
- Durable, stable and cleanable

The use of a container with a counter-balanced door in a patient exam room increases ease of use and decreases risk of exposure by facilitating one-hand disposal and tamper resistance. Containers mounted in locking cabinets at the appropriate height of 52"– 56" will further lower your risk of exposure.

Accessibility

- Ease of operation
- Guards that prevent hands from entering
- Handles to facilitate safe use, removal and transport
- Free of obstacles, away from wall switches, clear of impact zone
- Placed within arm's reach and below eye level at their point of use
- Appropriate wall mount height (52"– 56") to allow for view and safe access of container door



Courtesy of Becton, Dickinson and Company