

Table 2 Circumstances of most recent needlestick injury among health care workers (HCW) in teaching hospitals in Alexandria

Circumstance	No. (n = 438)	%
<i>Occupational group</i>		
Nurse	273	62.3
Support staff	62	14.2
Staff physician	48	11.0
Trainee physician	47	10.7
Technician, blood bank staff	8	1.8
<i>Device involved</i>		
Syringe needle (pre-filled, disposable)	168	38.4
Suture needle	102	23.3
Winged, butterfly needle	59	13.5
Intravenous catheter stylet	34	7.8
Lancet (for skin prick)	33	7.5
Blood collection (needle holder or vacuum tube)	26	5.9
Hypodermic needle attached to disposable syringe	15	3.4
<i>Location of occurrence (medical specialty area)</i>		
Inpatient ward	160	36.5
Intensive care unit	69	15.8
Dialysis unit	55	12.6
Operating room	46	10.5
Emergency room	39	8.9
Outpatient department	28	6.4
Delivery room	23	5.3
Laboratory	18	4.1
<i>Activity and timing of accident</i>		
Recapping or disassembly of needle	158	36.1
Inappropriate disposal of used device (container too full, wrong type)	124	28.3
After use and before disposal	49	11.2
Before use of the device	46	10.5
During use of the device	38	8.7
During disposal (appropriate)	23	5.3
<i>Work practice</i>		
Recapping by hand	148	33.8
Collision with another HCW or sharp	75	17.1

Unsafe collection and disposal of sharps waste	72	16.4
Patient moved and jarred device	42	9.6
Handling/passing equipment to another HCW	40	9.1
Transferring body fluids between containers	38	8.7
Manual tissue retraction	23	5.3
<i>Involvement of high-risk patient^a</i>		
No	211	48.2
Yes	36	8.2
Unsure/not specified	191	43.6
<i>Timing of injury</i>		
End of shift	320	73.1
Beginning of shift	118	26.9
<i>Health status of HCW after injury</i>		
Mental distress	339	77.4
Chronic illness	52	11.9
Normal	47	10.7

^aHigh-risk patient (history of infection with HIV, hepatitis B virus or hepatitis C virus or injecting drug user).