# A screen shot of a computer Description automatically generatedTrash handling-sharps

Needlestick accidents can occur while removing or transporting trash from a bin. When disposing of trash from medical rooms, restrooms, or public areas, anything can be found. Being aware of the potential risk inside these trash bags could prevent a sharps injury.

*To protect yourself:*

* Never reach into the trash container.
* Hold full trash bags away from your body.
* If you notice improper disposal of needles, contact your supervisor.
* Make sure there is adequate lighting when working in dark areas to avoid accidental contact with used needles or other sharp objects.
* If you find a needle or syringe, always assume it is contaminated and handle it accordingly.
* Always wear proper PPE, such as protective gloves, when handling trash or cleaning.

*What do I do if I am Exposed?*

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, follow these guidelines if you are exposed to a needlestick:

* Wash needlesticks and cuts with soap and water
* Flush splashes to the nose, mouth, or skin with water
* Rinse eyes with clean water
* Report the incident to your supervisor
* Immediately seek medical treatment

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