

SAFETY ALERT

Incident Type: Laceration to the hand

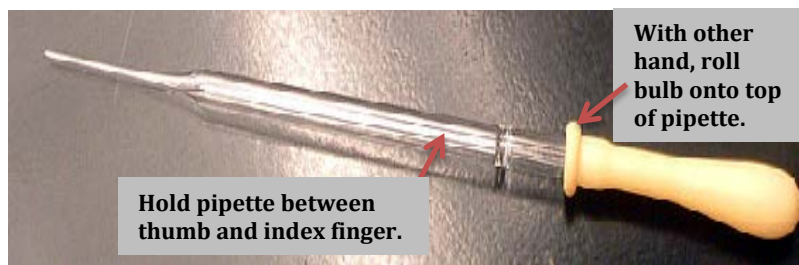
Date: March 6, 2014

RMS Contact: Lisa Bognar Phillips, bognar.6@nd.edu

Incident Description

A graduate student was preparing a solvent for testing. A Pasteur pipette was used to draw up the material for testing (Trifluoroacetic acid). As the graduate student was placing a bulb on the Pasteur pipette, the pipette broke and punctured the student's hand causing a puncture and laceration injury.

Photo 1. Proper Hand Placement When Applying a Pipette Bulb



Incident Findings:

- Graduate student was preparing solvent for testing.
- The lab procedure required use of Trifluoroacetic acid which was incompatible with plastic so a glass pipette was used.
- This is a routine task; it is completed 2-3 times a week.
- The student was wearing nitrile gloves.
- Emergency reporting procedures were followed.

Root Cause: Human action

- The graduate student was cut because the pipette shattered while he was placing the suction bulb on it. The student's fingers were placed too low on the pipette barrel while he was pushing the bulb in place resulting in the pipette to break.

Recommended Actions:

- Provide instruction to lab personnel on proper hand placement when applying a pipette bulb. Hold the pipette above the midpoint of the barrel between your thumb and index finger. With the other hand, roll the pipette bulb onto the top of the pipette. See Photo 1.