



# SAFETY ALERT

RISK MANAGEMENT & SAFETY

## Microtome Finger Laceration

**Event:** Finger Laceration During Microtome Use  
**Date:** April 2017  
**Category:** Injury  
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### Description

A student cut an index finger on a microtome blade while cleaning the microtome. The student sought treatment at the Wellness Center.

### Findings

- The student was volunteering in the Harper Cancer Research Institute Biorepository for the semester.
- The student had completed all laboratory safety training.
- The student had been trained and observed while doing the procedure several times prior to doing it on her own.
- The student had done this procedure 6-8 times on her own.
- The student was in the lab alone.
- The student used gauze pads to brush paraffin from the microtome.
- The student was not wearing gloves.
- The student was wearing eye protection and a lab coat.
- The student notified her supervisor immediately after the injury.

### Root Cause

Human action: Distracted due to interruption to the microtome cleaning process.

### Recommended Actions

- Retrain student on microtome SOP and document training
- Develop process to document training for new Biorepository personnel.
- Post warning sign "Remember to remove blade prior to cleaning" on microtome.
- Develop process to ensure that undergrads are supervised while in the lab working on the microtome.