

Reminder About Safe Injection Practices

To: Dental Care Providers
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– Please Distribute Widely –

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has linked outbreaks of bacterial and viral infections to unsafe injection practices among health and dental care providers. According to CDC, since 2001 more than 130,000 patients have been notified that they may have been exposed to hepatitis B, hepatitis C, or HIV through unsafe injection practices.

In a recent example, a Colorado dentist is under investigation for reusing syringes and needles to inject multiple patients with intravenous medications, including sedation. This practice occurred over an 11 year period. More than 8,000 patients have received letters from the Colorado Department of Health recommending that they be tested for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and HIV.

The One & Only Campaign was created by CDC and the Safe Injection Practices Coalition to bring attention to the issue of unsafe injection practices. Information from the campaign can be found here: <http://www.oneandonlycampaign.org/>

One & Only Campaign Recommendations:

- Never administer medications from the same syringe to more than one patient, even if the needle is changed.
- After a syringe or needle has been used to enter or connect to a patient's IV, it is contaminated and should not be used on another patient or to enter a medication vial.
- Never enter a vial with a used syringe or needle.
- Never use medications packaged as single-dose vials for more than one patient.
- Assign medications packaged as multi-dose vials to a single patient whenever possible.
- Do not use bags or bottles of intravenous solution as a common source of supply for more than one patient.
- Follow proper infection control practices during the preparation and administration of injected medications.

Adapted from: Guideline for isolation precautions: preventing transmission of infectious agents in health care settings 2007. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, CDC; 2007: <http://www.cdc.gov/hicpac/pdf/isolation/isolation2007.pdf>