
Abstract:

BACKGROUND: Sharps injuries pose considerable risk to physicians. We examined prevalence and rates of reporting of sharps injuries of dermatologists and dermatology trainees, focusing on motivations for and barriers to reporting. We identified types of procedures carrying highest risk.

OBJECTIVE: To characterize the factors influencing sharps injuries and reporting practices.

METHODS AND MATERIALS: Current dermatology residents, fellows, and practicing dermatologists were surveyed using an anonymous electronic survey regarding needlestick injuries.

RESULTS: Of 336 dermatologist respondents (26.5% response rate [336/1,268]), 286 (85.1%) reported having had a sharps injury; 116 (40.6%) had occurred within the past year. Sixty-eight injuries occurred during surgery (58.6%), and 106 were perceived to be self-inflicted (91.4%). Physicians most likely to report recent sharps injuries were trainees (26/41, 63.4%), dermatologic surgeons (24/64, 37.5%), and medical dermatologists (3/11, 27.3%). One hundred eighty-three (64%) respondents reported having ever had a sharps injury that went
unreported. Dermatologists at academic institutions were more likely to report injuries than those in solo (odds ratio = 2.97, P = .23) or group (OR=2.29, P < .001) practice.

CONCLUSIONS: Sharps injuries are common among dermatologists. Underreporting is common and places providers and patients at risk of blood-borne illnesses.