Needlestick injuries are usually minor, but they can be serious.

**Most common injuries**
- Skin infections
- Allergic reactions
- Deep tissue wounds that require surgery

**Less common injuries**
- Miscarriages due to hormone products
- Serious cardiovascular events (Micotil/tilmicosin)
- Suppression or coma from sedatives like xylazine
- Systemic infections
- Allergic reactions to antibiotics

### Implement a Comprehensive Needlestick Prevention Program

**Employee Practices**
- Slow down - don’t rush with injections
- Restrain animals properly
  - Get help from coworkers
  - Use the correct equipment and techniques
- Don’t put needle caps in your mouth
- Discard bend needles - don’t use or straighten
- Don’t carry needles/syringes in your pockets
- Use approved sharps containers
- Don’t remove needles from sharps container
- Don’t recap needles
- Report all needlestick injuries to management
- Contact your healthcare provider

**Management Practices**
- Train employees about
  - Safe needle handling
  - Safe injection procedures
  - Type of drugs used
- Routinely re-train employees to reinforce safety procedures
- Provide safe animal handling equipment; ensure proper staffing
- Provide readily accessible sharps container for safe needle disposal
- Provide needle/syringes with protective devices, such as retractable needles or hinged syringe caps
- Remind employees to use caution when using products of concern
- Pregnant employees should not inject hormones
- Encourage employees not to rush
- Encourage employees to report injuries
- Employee should contact a healthcare provider

**Products of Most Concern**
- Tilmicosin (Micotil®)
- Sedatives (e.g. Xylazine)
- Oil-based adjuvants
- *Brucella abortus* Strain RB51 vaccine
- Modified live vaccines (e.g. Erysipelas vaccine)
- Johne’s vaccine
- Hormones - especially if pregnant
- Antibiotics - especially if allergic

**How Common are Needlestick Injuries?**
Needlestick injury research shows that over 80% of farm workers and 73% of swine veterinarians working in animal agriculture have accidentally stuck themselves. Vaccines are the most common type of product involved in needlestick injuries.

**MORE INFORMATION:**
umash.umn.edu/needlestick
https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/bbp/sharps.html

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