

OSHA 101

1. What is OSHA?

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is a division of the United States Department of Labor. Its mission is to "assure safe and healthy working conditions for working men and women by setting and enforcing standards and by providing training, outreach, education and assistance".

OSHA had developed standards and policies regarding health and safety of the workplace that each institution must follow.

OSHA's workplace safety inspections have been shown to reduce injury rates and injury costs without adverse effects to employment, sales, credit ratings, or firm survival.

2. OSHA Basics

There are many health and safety issues associated with working in healthcare facilities, some of these hazards include:

- Blood borne pathogens
- Air borne pathogens
- Infection control
- Electrical and fire hazards
- Hazardous materials
- General safety

OSHA requires employers to:

- Provide working conditions that are free of known dangers
- Keep floor in work areas in a clean, and, dry condition
- Select and provide required personal protective equipment at no cost to the employees
- Train employees about job hazards in *a language that they can understand*

3. Standard Precautions

In 1997, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) introduced the concept of Standard Precautions designed for the care of ALL patients regardless of their diagnosis or infection status. They're based on a risk assessment and make use of common sense practices and personal protective equipment use that protect healthcare providers from infection and prevent the spread of infection from patient to patient. Standard Precautions apply to:

- Blood
- All body fluids
- Secretions and excretions (except sweat)
- Non-intact skin
- Mucous membranes

There are three types of additional precautions that are based on the mode of transmission:

- Airborne Precautions

- Droplet Precautions
- Contact Precautions

4. General Safety

- Identify hazards before starting a job/procedure
- Respect all precautions
- Know in advance what could go wrong and what to do about it
- Learn and understand emergency procedures
- Follow all warnings and instructions
- Use the correct protective equipment and clothing
- Practice sensible work habits

5. Top 10 OSHA Violations for Physicians' Office and Clinics^A

- Failure to implement and maintain an Exposure Control Plan under the Bloodborne Pathogens (BBP) standard;
- Failure to train under the BBP standard;
- Failure to engineer out hazards/ensure hand washing under BBP standard;
- Poor housekeeping under the BBP standard;
- Failure to implement and maintain a written Hazard Communication Program;
- Failure to make the Hepatitis B vaccination available under the BBP standard;
- Failure to prepare Exposure Determinations under the BBP standard;
- Failure to use personal protective equipment under the BBP standard;
- Failure to provide post exposure Hepatitis B vaccination under the BBP standard; and
- Failure to train employees under the Hazard Communication standard.

6. Training

Free OSHA trainings are provided throughout the year by the Department of Labor-
<https://www.osha.gov/dte/>

At a minimum, Plastic Surgery offices should have high quality safety standards in place and follow those, in addition to taking annual OSHA training to stay up-to-date.

7. Resources

<https://www.osha.gov/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/>

- A. <https://www.fisherphillips.com/resources-newsletters-article-top-10-osha-citations-in-the-healthcare-industry-> accessed Nov 20, 2018