Sharps Disposal

Lancets and needles are considered “sharps”. To protect trash collectors and the environment, there are strict laws for safe disposal.

The preferred way to handle used sharps (lancets and needles) is to store them in a commercially-available sharps container. You can buy one from your pharmacy. When the container is full, take it to a participating pharmacy for free disposal. In Washtenaw County you can call 734-994-3435 to obtain a list of participating pharmacies.

Other Legal Choices

- a sturdy plastic container such as one for liquid laundry soap
- a metal coffee can

Note: Do not use a milk container – it’s too thin & fragile.

When your container is full, securely tape the opening, label it (write “SHARPS” with a marker), place it a garbage bag (clear is good), and put into the trash.

The recommended disposal of syringes and other sharps generated in the home can be found in a DEQ pamphlet entitled “The Point is…Needles Hurt!” This pamphlet, a list of sharps collection programs and services by county, and other information can be found on the Medical Waste Regulatory Program’s Web site at http://www.michigan.gov/deqmedwaste. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the DEQ’s Medical Waste Regulatory Program at (517) 335-1146 or (517) 241-1320, or by e-mail at medicalwaste@michigan.gov.

For more information about sharp disposal, including disposal laws, search the internet:

- by state: www.safeneedledisposal.org
- Google: type in sharps disposal and the name of your county (e.g. sharps disposal and Jackson county)

If you don’t have access to a computer, contact or visit the Mardigian Wellness Resource Center at the Cardiovascular Center (734-232-4120)