

Surgical Technology Occupational Hazards

There are many occupational hazards that are inherent to working in surgery. Students in their clinical rotations, and even students in the simulation lab setting, will be subject to any or all of the following:

- Exposure to blood and bodily fluids, infectious waste, and bloodborne pathogens
- Exposure to infectious diseases, including, but not limited to, HIV, Hepatitis B and C, influenza, MRSA, COVID-19, tuberculosis, measles, mumps, rubella, tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, and varicella
- Injury from contaminated sharps
- Injury from electrical shocks, burns, or eye damage related to electrosurgical devices and lasers
- Musculoskeletal injuries from required standing, lifting, and pulling
- Exposure to surgical smoke plume, including toxic chemicals and by-products such as hydrogen cyanide, toluene, perchloroethylene, benzene, formaldehyde, and ethylbenzene
- Exposure to teratogens, including cytotoxic compounds, chemical agents, sterilizing agents, cleaning agents, preserving agents, and fixing agents
- Exposure to hormones such as prostaglandins and progesterone
- Exposure to ionizing radiation and other sources of radioactive materials

Students are trained in appropriate safety measures and are expected to adhere strictly to all protocols to minimize risk. Awareness of these potential hazards is essential for maintaining personal and patient safety in all learning environments.