

# Mercer University Department of Biology

## Laboratory Safety Guidelines

1. Notify your instructor immediately if you are pregnant, color blind, allergic to any insects or chemicals, taking immunosuppressive drugs, or have any other medical condition (such as diabetes, immunologic defect) that may require special precautionary measures in the laboratory.
2. Upon entering the laboratory, place all books, coats, purses, backpacks, etc. in designated areas, not on the bench tops.
3. Locate and, when appropriate, learn to use exits, fire extinguisher, fire blanket, chemical showers, eyewash, first aid kit, broken glass container, and cleanup materials for spills.
4. In case of fire, evacuate the room and assemble outside the building.
5. Do not eat, drink, smoke, or apply cosmetics in the laboratory.
6. Confine long hair, loose clothing, and dangling jewelry.
7. Wear shoes at all times in the laboratory.
8. Cover any cuts or scrapes with a sterile, waterproof bandage before attending lab.
9. Wear eye protection when working with chemicals.
10. Never pipet by mouth. Use mechanical pipeting devices.
11. Wash skin immediately and thoroughly if contaminated by chemicals or microorganisms.
12. Do not perform unauthorized experiments.
13. Do not use equipment without instruction.
14. Report all spills and accidents to your instructor immediately.
15. Never leave heat sources unattended.
16. When using hot plates, note that there is no visible sign that they are hot (such as a red glow.) Always assume that hot plates are hot.
17. Use an appropriate apparatus when handling hot glassware.
18. Keep chemicals away from direct heat or sunlight.
19. Keep containers of alcohol, acetone, and other flammable liquids away from flames.
20. Do not allow any liquid to come into contact with electrical cords. Handle electrical connectors with dry hands. Do not attempt to disconnect electrical equipment that crackles, snaps, or smokes.
21. Upon completion of laboratory exercises, place all materials in the disposal areas designated by your instructor.
22. Do not pick up broken glassware with your hands. Use a broom and dustpan and discard the glass in designated glass waste containers: never discard with paper waste.
23. Wear disposable gloves when working with blood, other body fluids, or mucous membranes. Change gloves after possible contamination and wash hands immediately after gloves are removed.
24. Place gloves, swabs, toothpicks, etc., that may have come into contact with body fluids in a disposable autoclave bag.
25. Leave the laboratory clean and organized for the next student.
26. Wash your hands with liquid or powdered soap prior to leaving the laboratory.
27. The Biohazard symbol indicates procedures that may pose health concerns.
28. The Caution symbol points out instruments, substances, and procedures that require special attention to safety. These symbols appear throughout the manual.



**BIOHAZARD**



**CAUTION**