



# Technical Bulletin

## Division of Public and Behavioral Health



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Topic: Reuse of Fingerstick Devices

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To: Medical Assistants, Medical Facilities, Laboratories and Physician Practices

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### Current Situation

The Division of Public and Behavioral Health has found that medical facilities, including laboratories and physician practices, are inappropriately reusing fingerstick devices on multiple patients. Fingerstick devices are to be used per the manufactures instructions that notes they are for single use only or are reusable on one patient. Facilities have been found reusing the pen and changing the lancet (portion of fingerstick device that pierces the skin). Changing the lancet does not make the pen portion of the fingerstick device reusable even if the pen is disinfected between uses. The shared use of fingerstick devices is one of the common root causes of exposure and infections in healthcare settings.

### Background

Fingerstick devices are devices that are used to prick the skin and obtain drops of blood for testing. There are two main types of fingerstick devices: those that are designed for reuse on a single person and those that are disposable and for single-use.

- **Reusable Devices:** These devices often resemble a pen and have the means to remove and replace the lancet after each use, allowing the device to be used more than once. Due to difficulties with cleaning and disinfection after use and their link to numerous outbreaks, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that these devices never be used for more than one person.
- **Single-use, auto-disabling fingerstick devices:** These are devices that are disposable and prevent reuse through an auto-disabling feature. In settings where assisted monitoring of blood glucose is performed, single-use, auto-disabling fingerstick devices should be used.

### Recommendations

CDC recommends the following practice for anyone performing fingerstick procedures. Please review the following recommendations to ensure persons in your care are not at risk for infection.

- Fingerstick devices should **never** be used for more than one person.
- Auto-disabling **single-use** fingerstick devices should be used for assisted monitoring of blood glucose.

These recommendations apply not only to licensed healthcare facilities but also to any setting where fingerstick procedures are performed, including assisted living or residential care facilities, skilled nursing facilities, clinics, health fairs, shelters, detention facilities, senior centers, schools, and camps. Protection from

infections, including bloodborne pathogens, is a basic requirement and expectation anywhere healthcare is provided. If it is found proper procedure is not followed, it will result in a citation from the DPBH, may result in monetary penalties and may be reported to the National Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank.

## Educational Sources

Below is the link for the One and Only Campaign. This website educates healthcare workers and others on the proper use of syringes, needles, medication vials, glucose pins, and fingerstick devices.

<http://www.oneandonlycampaign.org/>



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