

MEDICAL WASTE: WHAT TO PUT IN THE RED TRASH BAGS

There are multiple definitions used for Medical Waste (which is also referred to as regulated, infective, infectious, and biohazardous waste). A definition from OSHA defines biohazardous waste as:

1. “Any liquid or semi-liquid blood or other potentially infectious materials;
2. Contaminated items that would release blood or other potentially infectious materials in a liquid or semi-liquid state if compressed;
3. Items that are caked with dried blood or other potentially infectious materials and are capable of releasing these materials during handling;
4. Sharps (including needles, scalpel blades, glass, pipettes) contaminated with blood and body fluids;
5. Pathological and microbiological wastes containing blood or other potentially infectious materials.”

The following table will assist you in determining what should be discarded in the Red Trash receptacles. More importantly, it will outline what you should **NOT** put in the Red Trash receptacles. Sharps should be disposed of in sharps containers.

| <u>DO</u> PUT IN RED TRASH | <u>DO NOT</u> PUT IN RED TRASH (UNLESS SOILED WITH BLOOD OR BODY FLUID, INCLUDING FECAL MATERIAL) |
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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Vaginal speculums 2. Swabs used for obtaining specimens of blood or body fluids 3. Drapes, gauze or other absorbent material used to soak up blood or body fluids 4. Gloves contaminated with blood or body fluids (including fecal material) 5. Expired drugs, vaccines, control solutions and medications (excluding controlled prescription drugs) 6. Used urine specimen cups after the urine is discarded – preferably in the toilet. 7. Paper towels used to absorb blood or body fluids 8. Used urinary catheters and foley bags 9. Used urine pregnancy tests 10. Used urine dipsticks 11. Used fecal occult blood tests | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Food wrappers 2. Beverage containers 3. Paper towels 4. Paper 5. Examining table paper 6. Patient gowns or drapes 7. Tongue depressors 8. Ear speculums 9. Gloves 10. Empty IV bags and used tubing |