LAB SAFETY HIGHLIGHTS

Latex Allergy
The most common cause of latex allergy in laboratory workers is direct contact with latex gloves. Symptoms of exposure include: nasal, eye, or sinus irritation, hives or rash, difficulty breathing, coughing, wheezing, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea. If you have any of these symptoms you should be evaluated by a physician as further exposure may cause a serious allergic reaction.

EMERGENCY SHOWERS AND EYEWASHES
Do you know where the nearest emergency shower and eyewash station is located in your work area? The area around emergency showers and eyewashes should be kept clear at all times, but that is not always the case. Often there is a lack of space in the lab or you put something down temporarily and then later forget to move it. This prevents easy access in the event of an emergency. Take the time to learn the location of the emergency shower/eyewash, how to use them, and make sure the path to the units is clear.... you never know when you or a co-worker may need to use them.

STAY SHARP ON SHARPS
Did you know that razorblades, needles, syringes, and microtome blades must be disposed of properly?
- An approved sharps container should have a non-removable lid and both the lid and container should be puncture resistant.
- Metal sharps must be segregated from all other waste.
- Sharps that have radiological contamination must be disposed of as radiological waste.
- Containers with biohazard sharps must be autoclaved before disposal.
- For other sharps, remove the biohazard label on the container and label as “Non-biohazard Sharps”.
- When the container is three quarters full, follow the correct procedure to dispose of the sharps and make sure a new container is available. The full container should be placed in a box or black trash bag before disposal in the dumpster.