

Policy for Handling Tissue Samples Containing Radioactive Material

Blood and/or tissue samples are sometimes required from patients administered radioactive materials. To maintain regulatory compliance and maintain doses to employees as low as reasonably achievable, these samples will be handled as follows:

Bodily Fluids and/or Tissue samples from patients undergoing diagnostic Nuclear Medicine Procedures:

1. The amount of radioactive material injected into a patient for a diagnostic nuclear medicine scan presents an extremely minimal risk to staff who work with the patients or handle the patient's blood, body fluids, secretions and excretions.
2. Standard precautions provide the necessary protection for staff who handle samples obtained from patients that have received diagnostic scans.
3. Spills of urine, blood, or body fluids should be cleaned using Standard Precautions. Any absorbent material used to soak up blood or body fluids should be disposed of in the infectious waste receptacle.
4. Equipment used in sample preparation or analysis can be cleaned in accordance with the normal procedures for that equipment.
5. The University of Pennsylvania Environmental Health and Radiation Safety Office will advise staff if additional precautions need to be taken.

Bodily Fluids and/or Tissue samples from patients undergoing therapeutic Nuclear Medicine Procedures or Radiation Oncology Sealed Source Implants:

1. Samples containing radioactive materials are not routinely taken from these subjects while they are hospitalized for radiation safety reasons.
2. Because these samples are infrequently taken and the handling instructions may vary depending on the sample and radioactive material, the University of Pennsylvania Environmental Health and Radiation Safety Office will advise staff if additional precautions need to be taken on a case by case basis.