

## Occupational Health – Fact Sheet

### PERSONAL HYGIENE

Laboratory work can be hazardous, and many things including training, PPE, and laboratory design must be implemented to facilitate safe work. One training topic that is of crucial importance to maintaining the health and safety of laboratory staff is personal hygiene. The BMBL outlines four main points regarding personal hygiene:

1. The laboratory supervisor must enforce the institutional policies that control access to the laboratory.
2. Persons must wash their hands after working with potentially hazardous materials and before leaving the laboratory.
3. Eating, drinking, smoking, handling contact lenses, applying cosmetics, and storing food for human consumption must not be permitted in laboratory areas. Food must be stored outside the laboratory area in cabinets or refrigerators designated and used for this purpose.
4. Mouth pipetting is prohibited; mechanical pipetting devices must be used.

Adherence to these guidelines is key to preventing laboratory acquired infections of staff members, as well as preventing accidental release of an agent into the environment.

**PREVENTION/CONTROL:** To prevent and control unintended infections, use uninfected animals for research, and isolate any animals used in clinical trials. Additionally, only conduct projects in laboratories with proper engineering controls and train staff members proper use of required PPE when they are in spaces containing live agent.

**TREATMENT:** If you incur injury in the laboratory, perform first aid immediately and report the incident to your supervisor. Be sure to report the source of your injury and any potential agent exposures that you may have sustained.