SAFE NEEDLE HANDLING

1. Prepare Sharps Container
   - Before using your sharps container, line it with the provided absorbent pad.
   - Yellow containers are for chemically contaminated sharps.
   - Red containers are for biologically contaminated sharps.
   - Keep your sharps container nearby with the lid securely applied to prevent spillage.

2. Handle Needle Safely
   - Keep your needle capped until you need it.
   - Secure organisms, flasks, and vials prior to uncapping your needle.
   - After using the needle, do not remove it from the syringe.

3. Dispose of Needle
   - Do not recap used needles. Dispose of them immediately in the proper sharps container.*
   - When disposing of chemically contaminated sharps, record chemical contaminants on a chemical waste label on the side of the container.
   - Dispose of your sharps container when it is ¾ full. Do not overfill. Ensure both the lid and round opening on the lid are secured.

*If your procedure requires recapping, you must contact Research Safety for approval to recap.

Did you know:
- Contaminated needle sticks can inject substances into the body, potentially causing serious injuries.
- Needle sticks account for 10% of injuries at Northwestern.
- Breaking a used needle can aerosolize any chemical residue in the dead volume.
- The dead volume is the space in the needle tip that contains residual chemicals.
- Most needle injuries occur on the non-dominant hand.