Medical News

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American College of Surgeons and CDC to Sponsor Conference on Surgical Blood Exposures

The American College of Surgeons (ACS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will cosponsor a conference on "Prevention of Transmission of Bloodborne Pathogens in Surgery and Obstetrics," February 13-15, 1994, in Atlanta. The conference will include state-of-the-art lectures by experts in the field, as well as presentation of original research. Major topics will include data on the risk of transmission of bloodborne pathogens to healthcare workers in surgical and obstetrical suites; information on new devices, technology, and protective equipment that may reduce occupational exposure in surgical and obstetrical settings; and methods to evaluate studies of risk and prevention measures. The abstract deadline is October 31, 1993. For registration and hotel information, contact John F. Lynch, American College of Surgeons, 55 East St., Chicago IL 60011-2797. Telephone (312) 664-4050.

EPA Issues Stop-Sale Order on Sterilizing Solution for Lack of Efficacy

Citing failure to meet efficacy tests and the potential danger to human health, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a stopsale, use, and removal order on May 18, 1993, against the liquid chemical sterilant 'Wipeout Cold Sterilizing Disinfecting Solution." EPA also asked the registrant, Health Care Products, Inc., of Canada (acting through the American agent, Meditox, Inc., Deer-field Beach, FL) to recall the product voluntarily. Any leftover stock of this product should not be used, the EPA warned. This is the fourth liquid chemical sterilant that EPA has taken action against since it reinstated its efficacy testing program. The other products that failed EPA's efficacy testing include Bionox A and Bionox B Rapid Sterilizing Solution (Bionox Company, Inc.); Coldspor (Coldcide 10) Sterilizing Disinfecting solution (Coldcide, Inc.); and Sporicidin Cold Sterilizing Solution (Sporicidin International).

Prior to 1982, EPA conducted limited testing of sterilants to confirm efficacy data submitted by the registrants to support claims on the product labeling. Due to budget constraints, such testing was curtailed. Since that time, registrants have been required to submit full registration data completed by a second source laboratory before an EPA registration could be granted. Concerns from the public health community about the efficacy of antimicrobial products has prompted the EPA to reassess its policy on efficacy testing of liquid chemical sterilants and other public health products. Three years ago, EPA entered into an interagency agreement with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to test the efficacy of all registered liquid chemical sterilants, products that are crucial to infection control. Wipeout is one of 34 liquid sterilants registered in the United States. Additional information about specific actions taken by the EPA can be obtained from the EPA Communications Branch, Field Operations Division, at (703) 3055017.

NIOSH to Sponsor Workshop on Preventing Airborne Infections in Healthcare Facilities

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is convening a workshop on "Engineering Controls for Preventing Airborne Infections in Healthcare and Related Facilities." The workshop will be held on July 1416, 1993, at the Omni Netherland Hotel, in Cincinnati, Ohio. The purpose of the workshop is to review the nature and extent of airborne transmission of infections in workers in healthcare and related facilities; review current data and new findings regarding the engineering controls of airborne infections that may have relevance to occupational exposures; and recommend a national research agenda that would close the gap and permit reliable recommendations for protecting healthcare workers.

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