

HOW TO AVOID SOME COMMON LAB ACCIDENTS

Choose the suitable title for each of the lab accidents described.

Chemical burns – Contamination - Cuts and scrapes – Eye injuries - Fire – Heat burns – Inhalation – Spills and breaks

1. – Make sure all flammable materials are properly sealed and stored, and inspect burners for any leaks to prevent sudden flares.
2. – You can burn yourself on a hot plate, accidentally grab a piece of hot glassware, or burn yourself by getting too close to a burner. Don't forget to tie back long hair and don't lean over a flame.
3. – It's not just the skin on your hands that is at risk from chemical exposure, you can inhale corrosive or reactive vapors. If you're extra-stupid, you can ingest harmful chemicals by swallowing liquid from a pipette or not cleaning up well enough after lab and contaminating your food with traces of chemicals on your hands or clothing. Goggles and gloves protect your hands and face and a lab coat protects your clothing. Don't forget to wear closed-toe shoes.
4. – You can cut yourself when using sharp tools, breaking glassware or trying to clean up without carefully wrapping broken glass, needles or razor blades before carrying them to the trash. The best way to prevent the injury is to wear gloves.
5. – Your eyes are at risk in the chemistry lab and eye injuries are probably the most common serious wounds. Always wear glasses or safety goggles to protect your eyes from chemical splashes and errant shards of glass.
6. – Thoroughly wash your hands before and after working with any foreign substances. Also protect your skin and clothing with lab aprons, gloves, and/or glasses as needed. Leaving the lab with bacteria, tissue, or other potentially harmful substances on your skin or clothes can result in contamination of desks or lunch tables, causing illness and other complications.
7. – Accidentally inhaling gases in a poorly ventilated space can cause headaches, nausea, and even fainting. Be sure to know the proper procedures for using ventilation fans and the equipment to measure the amount of gas emission.
8. – Avoid any hasty movements in the lab. Dangers that can come from spilling chemicals and breaking glass, so know clean-up policies.