

Personal protective equipment, behaviour and clothing when working in laboratories pertaining to Biology

These instructions are minimum requirements for working in laboratories

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For laboratories in general

In laboratories handling particularly hazardous substances, it may be necessary to take extra precautions. Stricter rules may therefore apply to some laboratories. It is therefore important that you receive instructions/ take a guided tour prior to commencing work in the laboratory, e.g.

- contact the person responsible for each room so that you can become familiar with the specific rules and where protective equipment etc. is located *or* get a guided tour by the contact laboratory technician prior to commencing work in the laboratory.

Clothing:

In the laboratory, you must always wear suitable shoes or safety footwear that protect against spillage of chemicals. It is appropriate to use closed shoes in experimental laboratories.

Always wear suitable work clothes/lab coat in the laboratory, when **you or others are working with biological agents or hazardous substances**. The lab coat may not be removed from the laboratory, and clothing worn under the gown must not prevent free movement in relation to safety, sleeves may not extend beyond the lab coat, as they can knock down the bottles/flasks, catch fire from a Bunsen burner, etc. Dresses may not drag on/touch the floor, as they can cause falls and "absorb" spilled chemicals/microbiological/radioactive material and, thus, contaminate with impurities.

Headgear/Hair

In the laboratory, always be aware of free movement so that you have the widest possible perspective, ensuring correct and safe use of safety equipment such as glasses and dust masks.

Headphones/radio/mobile phones

It is normally ok to listen to music/radio when working in a laboratory or to use personal protective equipment, if you are working near noisy equipment.

However, use of headphones in the laboratory is prohibited, unless it is necessary, e.g. due to noise in connection with the work you are performing. In this case, you must use headphones that filter out the noise so that you are able to hear alarms etc. If you are listening to the radio, that is ok. But listen discriminately. The radio should never play louder than you can hear whether something undesirable is happening around you. You must be able to hear if anyone calls for help, an alarm goes off, etc.

In this connection, it is also important to be aware of contamination of the mobile phone, hearing protection, etc. If you touch these while working in the laboratory, remember to remove your gloves.

Gloves

When working with hazardous substances, suitable protective gloves must be used. Here, it is important to examine the permeation of each glove in relation to the substance in question. Read the workplace instructions/the chemical workplace assessment. It may be necessary to use cotton gloves inside the protection glove to shield hands from ingredients in the glove, which, in some cases, can cause allergies. Find relevant information in the glove guide:

<https://www.bfa-i.dk/arbejdsmiljoemner/kemi-biologi/allergi-og-beskyttelse/handsker-en-vejledning-om-brugen-af-handsker>

Hygiene and jewellery

Prior to leaving the laboratory, hands must be washed after working with hazardous substances, micro-organisms or animals, especially before going to lunch, etc. Do not wear jewellery if it prevents hand hygiene.

To protect hands from excessive dryness, various protective creams can be applied. Be aware of cracks and wounds on the hands, they may cause infections, etc. In certain cases, it is absolutely forbidden to work with open wounds, large cuts, etc.

Contact lenses and laboratory work

Be particularly aware of the chemicals you are working with when you wear contact lenses. It is not a good idea to wear contact lenses when working with corrosive chemicals. Therefore, wearing contact lenses when working in the laboratory is not recommended.

If you are in doubt, ask the person responsible for the laboratory.

Safety goggles, e.g. for laboratory/workshop use

Safety goggles are made available to employees who are at risk of damaging their eyes in connection with work. This includes work situations in connection with laboratory work, dishwashing, mechanical grinding and all situations involving machines with rotors, clearing scrubs, etc.

Under these conditions, the employee **must** wear safety goggles while performing work, this also applies during field work.

Eye wash bottles:

Eye wash bottles must always be available in situations/at locations where there is a risk of harmful substances getting in the eyes. This applies to fieldwork etc. and to whether you wear protective goggles. Eye wash bottles must be easily accessible and easy to use.

An expiration date is printed on eye wash bottles. The occupational health and safety groups replace these according to the specifications.

If corrosive substances enter the eyes, you must bring extra eyewash bottles to be used during transport to the emergency room.

If the injured person is wearing contact lenses, they must be removed, as they prevent rinsing from being effective and may cause etching to continue behind the lenses.

Respiratory protection

If the work cannot otherwise be planned and carried out responsibly, use suitable respiratory protection.

Various types of respiratory protection exist, e.g. self-contained, filtering (particle/gas), respiratory protection with different protective factors as well as different types of masks and filters. All respiratory protection equipment and associated parts must be CE marked.

It is important to use the appropriate respiratory protection for the task in question and to store and maintain it correctly and check the expiration date. It is particularly important to check the respiratory protection for good fitting.

There may be restrictions associated with the use of respiratory protection. For example, only use a filtered respirator for 3 hours per working day.