Lab Safety Tips

Most labs are relatively safe from serious hazards; however, we should not be lulled into thinking that they are completely risk free. Each lab has its own risks and students should be aware of them before they start using lab facilities or conducting experiments.

Safety must be a primary consideration for all persons working in a laboratory. Activities have been selected for their interest and relevance to the lecture class material as well as their expected safety for students learning new techniques. Students have a responsibility for learning and understanding the appropriate safety procedures for each specific activity. Further, each student has an obligation to consult the instructor for help when safety procedures or instruction are not clear. The following general procedures must be observed.

- Before beginning the first activity, familiarize yourself with the location of the fire extinguishers, first aid kits, safety shower, and eye wash or sink area in the laboratory. Consult with your instructor regarding the proper operation of this equipment. Always note any safety precautions which are mentioned for specific experiments.

- Approved goggles or safety glasses with side shields must be worn at all times while you or others are working with any chemical materials or liquids which could splash into a person's eye. Anyone not complying with this requirement will not be allowed in the laboratory.

- Wear appropriate clothing. This includes closed-toe shoes and some type of protective apron or lab coat if you are working with any type of chemical.

- Work is permitted in the laboratory during regular class periods when an instructor is present or after hours only with permission of the instructor. Performance of unauthorized experiments is not allowed.

- None of the following is permitted in the laboratory at any time: application of cosmetics, smoking, eating, or drinking.

- Dispose of all materials, including chemicals, glassware, and plastic ware, in the correct manner as shown by your instructor.

- Report any accident, even the most minor, to your lab instructor.

- In case of a chemical splash of any type, flush the area thoroughly with water for at least 15 minutes. For chemicals in the eyes use eyewash if available, and if not, water from a sink.
• If work is in an area other than regularly assigned lab, you must return it to the original state before you leave the area. Clean up all spills, and do not leave any materials out.

• Wash hands before you leave the laboratory.