



Clinical Waste Versus General Waste

Clinical waste

As defined in the RACGP Infection Control Standards for Office Based Practices – 4th Edition, clinical waste is that which has the potential to cause sharps injury, infection or public offence. It includes:

- discarded sharps;
- human tissue (excludes teeth, hair, nails, urine and faeces);
- materials which contain free flowing or expressible blood;
- related waste which includes:
 - cytotoxic waste (unused portion of cytotoxic drugs)
 - pharmaceutical waste
 - chemical waste (eg: formalin, alcohol based formulations)
 - radioactive waste

General waste

- office waste;
- kitchen waste;
- urine, faeces, teeth, hair, nails;
- sanitary napkins, tampons;
- disposable nappies;
- used tongue depressors;
- disposable vaginal speculae, cervical cytology spatulas and plastic cytology brushes;
- non hazardous pharmaceutical waste;
- items contaminated with blood or body substances (not to an extent to be considered clinical waste ie not contaminated with expressible blood).

Reference: RACGP Infection Control Standards for Office Based Practices – 4th Edition