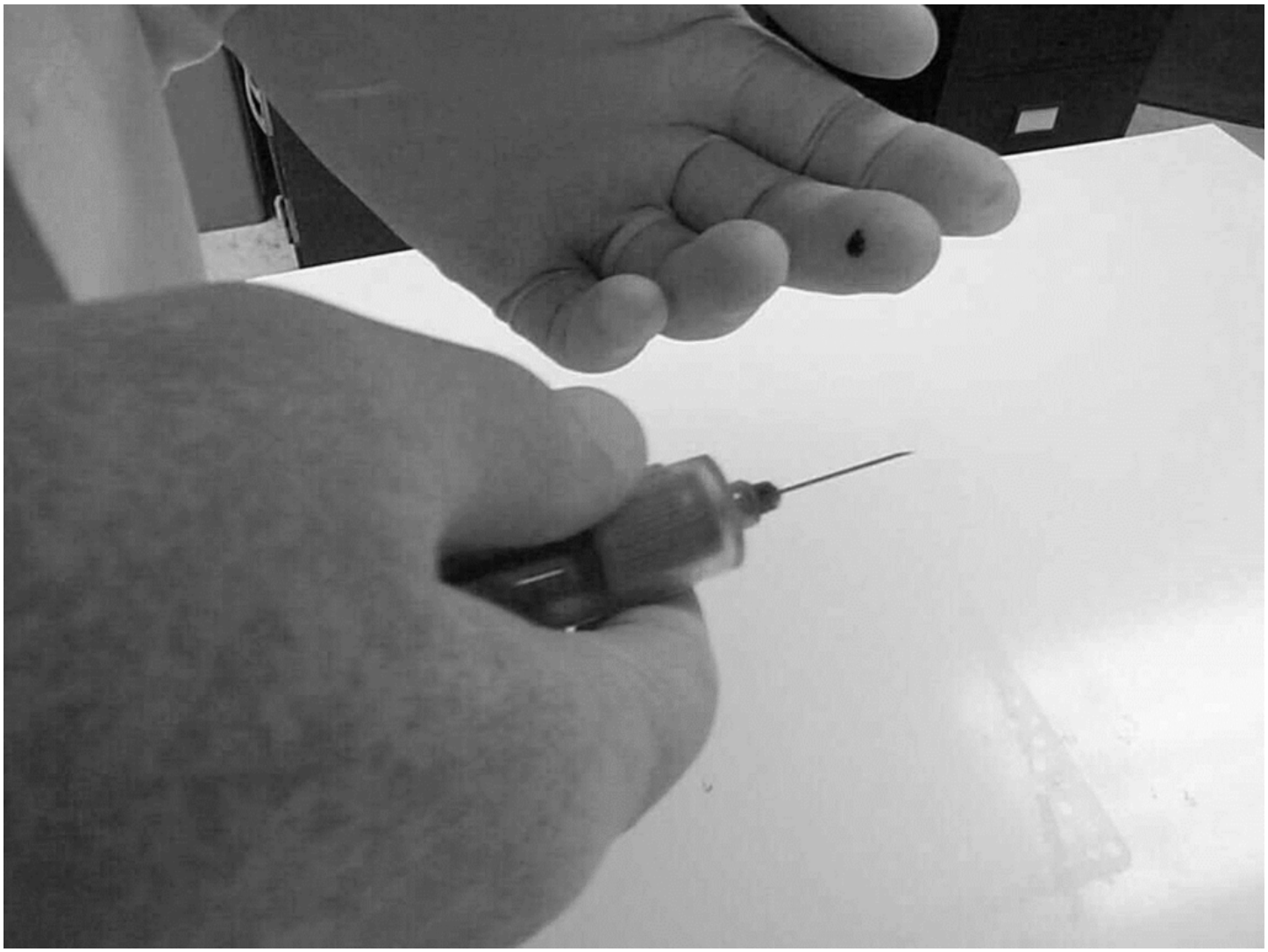
Bloodborne Pathogens – Picture This



What is wrong in this picture? Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis B virus (HBV), and hepatitis C virus (HCV) are three of the most common bloodborne pathogens from which health care workers are at risk. In this case as you can see on the image there is a health care worker who is potentially exposed to these diseases in this way; a percutaneous injury in which a health care worker is injured by a sharps object.

When personal protective equipment is not readily available or accessible, employees are less likely to wear it. This puts them at risk of exposure to blood and body fluids and vulnerability to bloodborne pathogens.

If you are stuck with a needle, get blood in your eye, or are exposed to any bloodborne pathogen; wash the area, use soap and water on your skin. If your eye is exposed, irrigate with clean water, saline, or a sterile irrigant, tell your supervisor right away that you were exposed, and get medical help right away. You may or may not need lab tests, a vaccine, or medicines.