

SAFETY IN THE TEACHING LABORATORY

Laboratory work involves hazards, the most common of which may be considerably reduced by understanding and implementing the following:

- 1 During this course you will be dealing with many **specimens** that contain **known and unknown pathogens**. For example, a specimen of blood, which you know contains the parasites of malaria, may also contain unknown to you, hepatitis B virus. **It is important, therefore, that you treat All specimens as though they contain unknown pathogens, which may be infective to you.**
- 2 **Most practical classes may involve the handling of known potentially infectious agents, eg., *Giardia lamblia*, *Entamoeba histolytica* and *Enterobius sp.*. Any special safety information regarding such specimens will be given to you at the beginning of the practical.**
- 3 **Laboratory coats must be worn for all practical work.**
- 4 The most common source of infection in the laboratory is contamination. **If you contaminate your bench, your microscope or yourself, you must deal with it at once and report it to a member of the laboratory staff.** You are the only person who knows the nature of the contamination and exactly what item is contaminated.
- 5 **DO NOT EAT, DRINK, SMOKE OR APPLY MAKE-UP IN THE LABORATORY.**
- 6 **If you cut or any other way injure yourself in the laboratory, please report it at once to one of the laboratory staff.**
- 7 When you have finished work at the bench you must **dispose all potentially infective materials, safely, in the containers provided and wash your hands before doing anything else.**

FIRE PRECAUTIONS

If you hear fire alarm at any time (a continuous loud bell), leave the laboratory immediately and go to your assembly point as instructed. Make sure that you know all the exits from the building.

HAVING PROBLEMS WITH YOUR MICROSCOPE

There are a number of common problems encountered during use of the microscope, particularly when you are unfamiliar with the instrument; the points listed should help.

- 1** During examination of a specimen, you notice that the light is unevenly distributed. Check that the objective in use has been fully 'clicked' into place before considering other adjustments.

- 2** The image is hazy and unclear when you move from x10 to x40 objective. Clean the objective lens with a clean tissue. If the problem remains, consult a member of the laboratory staff.

- 3** There appear to be dust particles over the image when using the microscope. Rotate each eyepiece in turn; if the dirt moves round, ask a member of staff to clean the eyepiece(s).

- 4** You can focus the specimen clearly when using the x10 and x40 objectives, but not the x100. Clean the objective lens with a clean tissue. If the problem remains, carefully remove the slide from the stage and check the specimen is uppermost. If necessary, consult a member of staff.

- 5** The image will not stay in focus during examination of a wet preparation. Check that the condenser is not racked so far down that it is resting on the field diaphragm unit.