



◆ **2003 NASA Occupational Health Conference:** All related information on the conference and on-line registration forms can be found at the [OH Conference Information page](#). Guaranteed Hotel Reservation and government rate cut off date is **July 3, 2003**.



◆ **NASA OH Support Office:** The Bionetics Corporation has announced that Helen Shoemaker, RN, MS, COHN/CM is Manager, NASA OH Support Office. Helen brings OH and management experience from private industry. She replaces Dr. Fatima Phillips who has resigned to pursue other interests.

◆ **Resources for Medical Policy Procedures and Questions:** Are you feeling overwhelmed with...Managing needlesticks and other occupational exposures? Consider accessing the following resources: **PEpline 1-888-448-4911, The National Clinician's Post-Exposure Prophylaxis Hotline offers health care providers free, state-of-the art advice on managing occupational exposures to HIV and Hepatitis B & C.

**www.cdc.gov/ncidod/hip/guide/phssep.htm contains complete documents on implementing PEP practices in healthcare facilities, management of occupational blood exposures and basic and expanded HIV PEP regimens.

◆ **OSHA Semiannual Regulatory Agenda Published:** OSHA unveiled its regulatory priorities for the next year as part of the Department of Labor's [Unified Agenda](#) that was published in the *Federal Register* on May 27. The semiannual regulatory agenda outlines work on new standards, including hexavalent chromium, crystalline silica, noise in construction, and assigned protection factors for respirators. The agenda also signaled OSHA's intent to make changes in other areas, including plans to withdraw the proposed TB rule in September. Since 1993, when OSHA began considering a standard, TB cases have declined 43.5 percent - largely due to the success of CDC Guidelines.

◆ **Impact of Depression on Employers:** A new study suggests that while treatment rates for major depression have improved significantly over the last two

decades, more than half of patients nationwide are getting inadequate therapy. JAMA study published in June 2003, estimates that depression costs U.S. employers \$44 billion yearly in absenteeism and lost productivity, \$31 billion more per year than related costs from non-depressed workers. Research has shown that a combination of medication and psychotherapy is best, but treatment needs to be tailored to the individual patient. Encourage employees to access Center EAP and community-based resources.

◆ **NIOSH Offers Preparedness Guidance on Building Air-Filtration:** The document, "*Guidance for Filtration and Air-Cleaning Systems to Protect Building Environments from Airborne Chemical, Biological, or Radiological Attacks*," was developed by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), in collaboration with a working group at the White House Office of Homeland Security, now the Department of Homeland Security. The new document, DHHS (NIOSH) Publication No. 2003-136, is available on the NIOSH Web site at

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2003-136/2003-136.html>.

◆ **Strategic Planning:** A strategy planning retreat was recently held by the NASA Office of the Chief Health and Medical Officer (OCHMO). Participants included OCHMO personnel from HQ and KSC and the Occupational Health Support office at KSC.



An update of the strategy planning session will be provided at the annual meeting in San Diego.

◆ **OH NASA Center Evaluation Calendar:**

- Marshall Space Flight Center- July 28-31

◆ **Upcoming Occupational Health ViTS:**

- EAP ViTS – July 7th, 3:00-4:00 EST
- EH ViTS – July 11th, 2:00-3:00 EST

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