**Occupational Hazards**

Not all patients are aware of an illness or disease that they may have, nor are they required to disclose that information according to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of Privacy (HIPAA).

Thus, as a Surgical technologist, you run the risk of being exposed to or at risk of:

* Exposure to infectious diseases and communicable diseases
* Airborne or blood-borne pathogens and biological hazards
* Sharps injuries
* Chemical and Drug exposure (example: ionizing radiation, bone cement, formalin, ethylene oxide, glutaraldehyde)
* Radioactive substance exposure
* Ergonomic hazards from lifting, sitting, and repetitive tasks
* Latex allergies
* Unpleasant sights and odors
* Electrical hazards
* Fire hazards (laser and electrosurgical unit)
* Biological hazards
* Surgical plume
* Stress

While the Skyline College Surgical Technology program works to safely prepare you for an entry-level position as a Certified Surgical Technologist, the risk of contracting a disease or illness is understood to be a hazard of the profession.

**Technical Requirements of a CST:**

* Stand, bend, stoop, and/or sit for long periods of time in one location with minimal/no breaks.
* Lift and hold waist high a minimum of 20 pounds such as an instrument tray prior to placing on sterile field while packaging is checked for integrity.
* Refrain from nourishment or restroom breaks for periods up to the duration of your shift.
* Demonstrate sufficient visual and tactile ability to load a fine (10-0, finer than a strand of hair) suture onto needles and needle holders with/without corrective lenses while wearing safety glasses.
* Demonstrate sufficient peripheral vision to anticipate and function while in the sterile surgical environment.
* Hear and understand muffled communication without visualization of the communicator’s mouth/lips within the operating room suite (an operating room suite can be up to 300 square feet).
* Hear activation/warning signals on equipment.
* Detect odors sufficient to maintain environmental safety and patient needs.
* Manipulate instruments, supplies, and equipment with speed, dexterity, and good eye-hand coordination.
* Ambulate/move around without assistive devices and within confined spaces.
* Assist with and/or lift, move, position, and manipulate, with or without assistive devices, the patient who is unconscious.
* Communicate and understand fluent English both verbally and in writing.
* Be free of reportable communicable diseases and chemical abuse.
* Demonstrate immunity to rubella, rubeola, tuberculosis, varicella, mumps and hepatitis B or be vaccinated against these diseases.
* Possess short- and long-term memory sufficient to perform tasks such as, but not limited to mentally tracking surgical supplies and performing anticipation skills intraoperatively.
* Demonstrate confidentiality by not sharing patient information with others including family members.
* Take “call” leaving family and friends at inconvenient times and within a geographic area that allows a 20-30 minute response according to policies.
* Must be able to wear a surgical face mask or toga for the duration of your shift.

*Adapted from the Association of Surgical Technologists and Owens Community College.*

Students with disabilities are encouraged to schedule an appointment with Melissa Matthews in the [Educational Access Center](https://skylinecollege.edu/educationalaccesscenter/)to determine appropriate accommodations. As students who enter the program do so with the understanding that they will be expected to meet course requirements with any reasonable accommodation that may be provided by the College.