

University Occupational Health and Safety Information Sheet

WORKING WITH CELL CULTURES

HAZARD	CELLTYPE	BASELINE CONTAINMENT LEVEL
LOW	<p>Non-human, non-primate cell lines where risk from zoonotic disease is negligible.</p> <p>Well characterised or authenticated finite or continuous cell line of human or primate origin:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With a long history of safe use; • That hold a low risk of endogenous infection with a biological agent; • Present no apparent harm to laboratory workers; • Have been tested for the most serious pathogens. 	Containment Level 1.
MEDIUM	Finite or continuous cell lines/strains of human or primate origin not fully characterised or authenticated, except where there is a high risk of endogenous biological agents, e.g. blood borne viruses.	Containment Level 2.
HIGH	<p>Cells cultures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspected to contain endogenous biological agents, or • That have been deliberately infected. 	<p>Recommended Containment Level 2 or higher.</p> <p>Containment Level appropriate to the potential risk as determined by the risk assessment process.</p>
	<p>Primary cells:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From blood or lymphoid cells of human or simian origin, or • Have been cultured for more than 100 hours. 	Containment Level appropriate to the potential risk as determined by the risk assessment process.

NOTE: Any work that gives rise to infectious aerosols must be carried out within a microbiological safety cabinet.