

## UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

Incidents where blood is encountered can occur anywhere and at any time. In order to be prepared for these incidents, it is a necessity to know and understand Universal Precautions. You should know the location of disposable single-use gloves, bandages and disinfectant in your building. You may consider making a small kit with gloves for traveling purposes such as field trips or recess.

## REDUCING YOUR RISK

Certain precautions and practices can reduce the likelihood of infection and decrease your risk of exposure to bloodborne pathogens. Five of these are:

- Engineering Controls
- Employee work practices
- Personal protective equipment
- Housekeeping
- Hepatitis B vaccine

Alone, none of these approaches is 100% effective. They must be used together, like five protective barriers against infection.

Each category A employee will be offered the hepatitis B vaccination. If an employee initially declines the vaccination, but at a later date, while still covered under these rules, decides to accept the HBV vaccine, the employer shall provide the vaccine at that time.

## ENGINEERING CONTROLS

These are physical or mechanical systems your employer provides to eliminate hazards at their source. Some examples are:

- Biohazard labels
- Gloves and protective gear

Engineering control effectiveness usually depends on you. Example: a biohazard container provides no protection if you do not use it for all contaminated materials as per procedure.

## WORK PRACTICE CONTROLS

These are specific procedures you must follow on the job to reduce your exposure to bloodborne pathogens or infectious materials.

## HAND WASHING

If infectious material gets on your hands, the sooner you wash it off the less chance you have of becoming infected.

- Hand washing keeps you from transferring contamination from your hands to other areas of your body or to other surfaces you may contact later.
- Every time you remove your gloves you must wash your hands with non-abrasive soap and running water as soon as you possibly can.
- Where hand washing facilities are not available, such as on the playground, the schools will provide an antiseptic hand cleanser or antiseptic towelettes. Use these as a temporary measure only. You must still wash your hands with soap and running water as soon as possible.
- Many schools use fanny packs to carry gloves and safety equipment on playgrounds.
- You know your environment best and need to arrange for your safety.

## PERSONAL HYGIENE

These additional self-protective controls should be followed to protect you:

- Wear gloves when performing procedures involving blood or other potentially infectious materials, minimize splashing, spraying, spattering and generation of droplets. Example: Before attending a child with a nosebleed, put on latex gloves.
- Do not eat, drink, smoke, apply cosmetics or lip balms, or handle contact lenses where you may be exposed to blood or other potentially infectious materials.
- Avoid petroleum-based lubricants that may eat through latex gloves.
- Never mouth potentially infectious materials.
- Don't keep food and drinks in refrigerators, freezers, cabinets or on shelves, countertops or bench tops where blood or other potentially infectious materials may be present.

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Equipment that protects you from contact with potentially infectious materials may include gloves, masks, gowns, aprons, lab coats, face shields, protective eye wear, mouthpieces, resuscitation bags or other ventilation devices.

Under normal work conditions, protective equipment must not allow potentially infectious materials to contact your work clothes, street clothes, undergarments, skin or mucous membranes. The type of protective equipment appropriate for a given task depends on the degree of exposure you anticipate. See your supervisor if you need guidance.