

PURPOSE/APPLICATION

To raise awareness regarding blood borne pathogens to our workforce, and to provide them an understanding of the hazards, precautions, and actions required to deal with exposures.

PPE

- Latex gloves
- Personal Barrier Device (Artificial Respiration)
- Particulate mask
- Safety glasses or goggles
- Face shield

TRAINING

- Standard First Aid
- Other personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Cleaning and disposing of blood and bodily fluids

HAZARDS & CONCERNS

- Exposure to bodily fluids
- Bio-hazardous waste
- SHARPS (instruments, needles, etc. which could cut or puncture the skin of anyone handling them) contaminated with Blood Borne Pathogens.



PRECAUTIONS

The following are potential sources where blood borne pathogen exposure could occur:

- Punctures (through the skin) injury caused by a sharp object that has come in contact with blood or other body fluids of concern.
- Human bite,
- Mucous membrane (eyes, nose or mouth) contact with blood or other body fluids of concern, and/or,
- Non-intact skin (healing wound < 3 days old or a lesion causing disruption of the skin surface) contact with blood or other body fluids of concern.

The primary methodologies for preventing exposure are:

- Avoid direct contact with bodily fluids.
- Wear appropriate PPE when exposure is imminent.
- Dispose of any contaminated materials in an appropriate manner, i.e. sealed to prevent exposure to others.

First aid room techniques and procedures are critical for protecting both the patient and the first aider from infection. First aiders are trained on these techniques and procedures. Reference your First Aid manual for details on the following Standard (Universal) Precautions:

- the use Personal Barrier Device - mouth to mouth ventilation.
- Hand Washing - when and how.
- Use of gloves (e.g. nitrile or vinyl for those with latex allergies), including proper glove removal (turn inside out).
- Other personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Cleaning first aid equipment and furniture.
- Cleaning blood and bodily fluid spills.

Action to be taken if exposed (or suspected exposure):

1. Follow standard first aid practice, make required notifications and request First Aid
 - The first aider may have to care for a patient with a blood borne pathogen exposure incident, or self-administer first aid if they are the one exposed.
 - If the mucous membranes of the eyes, nose, or mouth are affected, flush with lots of clean water at a sink or eye wash station.
 - If there is a puncture wound(s) or bite injury, allow the wound to bleed freely. Then wash the area thoroughly with non-abrasive soap and water.
 - If an area of non-intact skin is affected, wash the area thoroughly with non-abrasive soap and water.
 - Dress wound(s) as necessary.
2. Seek medical attention. Refer the patient to, or seek medical attention immediately (preferably within 2 hours), at the closest hospital emergency room, or at a health care facility (if there's no hospital emergency room in the vicinity). Immunizations or medications may be necessary as this may prevent infection or favorably alter the course of the disease if the individual does become infected. Blood tests may also be done at that time. Follow-up with the individual's family doctor may also be required.
3. Initiate incident investigation and complete the appropriate forms (e.g. First Aid and WCB claim forms) and submit for work related exposure incidents.

In Summary:

- If you have had actual or a suspected exposure to a blood borne pathogen, seek medical attention immediately.
- Complete appropriate hazard assessment prior to working in an area with a possible blood borne pathogen exposure.
- Protect yourself with appropriate PPE.
- Report any exposure or any possible blood borne pathogen contamination.

REFERENCES / ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A blood borne pathogen is an organism present in human blood that can cause disease in humans. The blood borne pathogens of most concern are hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV (the virus that causes AIDS).

In addition to blood, other body fluids may also spread these viruses:

- Body fluids that are visibly bloody,
- Saliva (may transmit only hepatitis B),
- Other bodily fluids (I.e. amniotic – fetus, pericardial – around heart, pleural - lining of lungs, peritoneal – abdomen, synovial – joints, cerebrospinal – brain and spinal cord),
- Breast milk - has been shown to transmit only HIV, and
- Semen and or Vaginal secretions.

Other viruses are transmitted (flu) by contact with body fluids like nasal secretions, however there is no evidence that the following body fluids spread hepatitis B and C, or HIV (Remember the concern or potential for blood in these fluids);

- Tears,
- Nasal secretions and or Sputum (coughed up from the lungs),
- Sweat,
- Vomit,
- Urine and or feces,

REGULATIONS

Alberta OHS Code

- Part 35 section 525.1 to 530

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