



PROCEDURE

HR102

Working with Blood–Borne Infections, Precautions and Practices

Board Received: November 22, 2021 Review Date: January 2026

Accountability:

1. Frequency of Reports – As needed
2. Criteria for Success – Appropriate safety precautions are taken.
– Equipment and training provided for all staff.

Procedures:

These procedures outline precautions applying to any staff involved in the care and the handling of individuals when blood and other body fluids are present.

Although the risk of contracting blood-borne infections through occupational exposure is very low, these infections are a reality when dealing with Hepatitis “B” (HBV), Human Immune-Deficiency Virus positive serology (HIV), Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) and other potential infections. Staff who may be exposed to blood and other body fluids should take appropriate precautions to minimize direct contact.

1. **Responsibility:**

Principals/supervisors have the responsibility to ensure that their staff are aware of the precautions and safe practices regarding blood-borne infections.

2. **Precautions:**

In order to minimize direct contact with blood and body fluids, the following general precautions are suggested for all situations where blood or body fluids are encountered:

- a) *Hand washing:* Hands (and any skin surface) must be washed thoroughly as soon as practicable. To wash hands, use plain soap and vigorously rub together all surfaces of lathered hands for at least twenty seconds. Rinse thoroughly under a stream of water. Cuts or sores on hands should also be covered with a waterproof dressing.
- b) *Gloves:* New, disposable waterproof vinyl gloves (or nitrile) should be worn when in contact with blood, blood products, other body fluids, open wounds or sores (non-intact skin) and items or surfaces soiled with blood or other body fluids. If gloves are punctured or cut they should be removed as soon as practicable. Schools will provide gloves for all staff who are involved.

Procedures for Using Gloves:

- i) Wash hands.
- ii) Put on gloves, making sure they cover cuffs if long sleeves are worn.
- iii) After using gloves, remove them by hooking gloved fingers of dominant hand into lower outside edge of the other glove. Pull the glove inside out as you remove it and then hold the glove in your gloved hand.
- iv) Tuck your ungloved hand into the inside of the remaining glove. Remove that glove by pulling it inside out and encase the other glove as you do so.
- v) Dispose of gloves immediately in waste disposal.
- vi) Wash hands thoroughly after removal of gloves.

Staff unfamiliar with gloving procedures are advised to contact the Health and Safety Office.

- c) *Pocket Masks or Other Ventilation Devices*: These can be purchased for those settings where the need for resuscitation can be anticipated. However, the risk of infection is so slight that no one should hesitate to give mouth-to-mouth resuscitation if such equipment is not available. Employees must be adequately trained in the use of such equipment.

3. Clean-up of Spills and Contaminated Surfaces:

Spills of blood or other body fluids and contaminated surfaces should be cleaned promptly with detergent and water, using disposable towels. The area should then be disinfected with a disinfectant cleaning product and left to dry. Chemical germicides approved for use as hospital disinfectants can also be used. The Material Safety Data Sheet for the product must be checked before use and all safety precautions followed.

4. Waste Disposal:

- a) Sharp Devices and Glass (needles, syringes, broken glass, sharp devices or instruments):
 - should be placed in disposable, puncture-resistance containers;
 - prior to disposal, puncture resistant containers should be securely sealed and the contents identified with a label or tag;
 - schools may be able to arrange for disposal through hospitals in the community;
 - if in doubt, call the Health and Safety Office.
- b) Solid Wastes (ie. disposable articles and dressings):
 - should be placed in a sturdy impervious (plastic) bag, tied securely with a twist tie and the contents identified with a label or tag;
 - double bagging is necessary only if the outside of the bag is contaminated with blood or other body fluids, or if there is potential for leakage;
 - dispose with regular garbage in a secure sanitary landfill or have incinerated.
- c) Unclotted Blood and Other Body Fluids:
 - dispose into a drain connected to a sanitary sewer and flush with water.
- d) Soiled Clothing:
 - clothing which has been soiled with blood or other body fluids may be washed with regular laundry;
 - soiled linen and clothing should be handled as little as possible;
 - linen and clothing which have been heavily soiled with blood or other body fluids should be transported in bags that prevent leakage, and be tagged indicating the contents.

5. What to do if Exposure Occurs:

- a) where there has been contact or splashes of blood or other body fluids on the skin, the area should be thoroughly washed as soon as practicable with soap and water;
- b) splashes of mucosa membranes such as the lips, mouth, eyes or nose, should be flushed with water as soon as practicable;
- c) clothing which becomes soiled with blood or other body fluids should be removed as soon as practicable;
- d) penetrating wounds such as needle/stick punctures or cuts from sharp objects should be encouraged to bleed and then washed thoroughly with soap and water; medical attention should be sought as soon as possible if exposure to a biological or chemical agent is suspected.
penetrating wounds or splashes onto mucous membrane or non-intact skin should be reported to the employee's principal/supervisor. If blood enters an open cut or sore on your

hands, etc., wash thoroughly and proceed to the nearest hospital emergency for follow-up for HBV, HCV, and HIV, preferably within one to two hours of exposure

- e) Employees who are exposed should complete the online Employee Injury Report through the Staff Portal within 24 – 48 hours, so that the event can be documented and forwarded on to the WSIB.

6. Giving First Aid to Any Person:

- a) Where feasible, wash your hands first.
- b) Always:
 - i) wear disposable gloves, especially if you have any open cuts, sores, etc. on the hands;
 - ii) wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water after giving the first aid;
 - iii) if blood enters an open cut or sore on your hands, etc., wash thoroughly and proceed to the nearest hospital emergency for follow-up for HBV, HCV, and HIV, preferably within one to two hours of exposure;
 - iv) after wiping up spilled blood with a paper towel, etc., wipe the surface with a disinfectant cleaning product and allow to air dry;
 - v) soiled gloves, towels, etc. should be placed in a plastic or paper bag and discarded in the waste disposal.