

Precautions Pay: Protect Yourself Against Bloodborne Pathogens



Overview

- Bloodborne pathogens are microorganisms in human blood and some other body fluids that cause diseases, such as Hepatitis B (HBV) and AIDS from the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).
- Bloodborne pathogens can enter the body through:
 - the mucous membranes in the eyes, nose or mouth
 - a cut, tear or abrasion in the skin
 - a skin puncture from a contaminated object
- Always treat all blood and body fluids as if they are contaminated.
- Protect yourself FIRST when responding to an injury.
- Never eat, drink, smoke or use lip balm in potentially contaminated areas.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Hypoallergenic, impermeable rubber type gloves.
- A face shield.
- Safety glasses or goggles.
- Protective clothing.
- A CPR mask with a one-way valve for mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

Clean-Up Procedures for Contaminated Surfaces and Tools

- Wear personal protective equipment during clean-up.
- Use disinfectants designed to kill the pathogens on contact.
- Disinfect the entire area.
- Do not touch anything that might cut you, such as sharp-edged metal or broken glass.

Clean-Up Procedures for Contaminated PPE

- Turn protective clothing and gloves inside out as you remove them to keep the contaminated surfaces away from your body.
- Place in a red, leak-proof bag or canister with a biohazard label.



Clean-Up Procedures for Your Body

- Wash your skin thoroughly with soap and water even if you were wearing protective equipment.
- Vigorously scrub your hands and areas where contact occurred.
- If running water isn't available, use a waterless disinfectant hand cleaner or disinfectant towelettes and wash thoroughly with soap and water as soon as they are available.
- If your mucous membranes came into contact with blood or body fluids, gently, but thoroughly, rinse these areas with water.
- Ask your supervisor about the Hepatitis B vaccine.