



for custodians

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS AWARENESS

As a custodian, you may often come into contact with blood and other body fluids at work. To protect yourself, it is important to understand the possible danger of exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials (OPIM) and ways to minimize that risk.

Bloodborne pathogens can cause infection by entering the body through open cuts, skin abrasions, dermatitis (if skin is broken), acne and mucous membranes (mouth, eyes and nose). The most common diseases carried by blood are Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV/AIDS.

To help prevent the spread of disease, follow these guidelines:

- Treat ALL human blood or bodily fluids as if known to be infectious with a bloodborne disease.
- Use the personal protective equipment (PPE) that is available (gloves, safety glasses, face shield, gown, apron, shoe covers, resuscitation devices, etc.). Wear gloves anytime you may come into contact with blood or OPIM. Disposable gloves are used once and then disposed of. Heavy-duty utility gloves used for housekeeping may be properly cleaned and disinfected for future use. Check gloves periodically to ensure they are in good condition (no rips or holes).
- Be aware of sharp objects. Never pick up broken glass with your bare hands. Use proper equipment to clean up broken glass such as broom & dust pan or shovel.
- Clean and disinfect all hard, soiled, washable surfaces immediately. Commercial disinfectants or a 10% bleach-to-water solution (10 parts water to one part household bleach) may be used. Thoroughly wipe down the area (paper towels work) with soap and water and then disinfect or bleach, and then let the area air dry. Also disinfect any tools that you use.
- Dispose of contaminated materials properly.
- Have a written cleaning and decontamination schedule and procedures.
- Handle contaminated product as little as possible.
- Wash hands frequently and before eating, drinking, applying cosmetics, after using the restroom, after handling any body fluids, and after removing gloves.
- When handling or emptying waste containers don't squeeze or push down waste with hands or feet. Waste should only be pushed or tamped down with a device that removes the hands or feet from contact with the waste.

If you are exposed to another person's blood or OPIM, as soon as possible:

- Flush the exposed area with water.
- Wash the area thoroughly with soap and water.
- Report the incident to your supervisor

These simple steps will contribute to the overall safety of staff and lessen the possibility of exposure to bloodborne pathogens on the job.

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