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BLOODBORNE PATHOGEN PRECAUTIONS

Purpose

Health and safety authorities throughout the world agree that blood and certain other body fluids should be considered a hazard for the potential of bloodborne pathogen infection in directly exposed workers. "Bloodborne Pathogen Precautions" (formerly Universal Precautions) is the standard practice for preventing exposure to blood and bodily fluids. There are a number of bloodborne pathogens of which Hepatitis B and C and HIV (AIDS) are the most important. Transmission occurs by direct contact with infected blood or certain other body fluids such as, but not limited to semen, vaginal secretions, blood tinged body cavity fluids. Exposure to feces, urine, vomit, sputum, tears, nasal secretions are not considered risky unless visibly blood-tinged.

Scope

This operating procedure applies to all staff that may come into contact with blood or other bodily fluids including but not limited to teachers, students, caretakers and cleaners.

Definition of a Significant Exposure

Exposure to blood or body fluids in the following ways:

Puncturing the skin with a sharp object coated with blood or bodily fluid, e.g. needles, razor, broken glass, scissors, knife, etc.

Splashing blood onto non-intact skin (e.g. abrasion, eczema, other damaged skin)

Splashing blood onto mucous membrane (eyes, nose, mouth).

Clean-up Procedures:

Gloves

Latex or vinyl gloves are to be worn:

When handling any items soiled with blood or bodily fluid; or

When there is direct contact with blood or bodily fluid; or

When contact with open wounds or sores occur.

Spills

Floor areas or benches, which have been contaminated with blood or bodily fluid, should be promptly cleaned with absorbent disposable paper toweling which is then disposed into plastic bags. The area should then be cleaned with water and detergent followed by disinfecting with household bleach, one part bleach to nine parts water (1:10 dilution) and allowed to air-dry.

Hand-washing

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Hand washing is the most important aspect of infection control, regardless of the appropriate use of gloves. Hands must be washed thoroughly with soap and water after all direct contact with blood or bodily fluids.

Soiled Clothing

Clothing soiled with blood or bodily fluid should be removed and laundered in the usual fashion.

Soiled Tools and Instruments

Tools, chisels, drill bits, etc. which come into contact with B/BF should be cleaned with paper towels, washed and decontaminated with an appropriate disinfectant. If mops have been used in the cleanup, they should be thoroughly washed in soap and water and dried before re-use.

Cleaning Products

Soap (and water) is the most common and most easily accessible cleaning product. A commonly used disinfectant is household bleach solution, one part bleach to nine parts water (1:10 dilution) prepared daily. For decontamination of aluminum or electronic equipment, a 70% isopropyl alcohol solution should be applied for 10 minutes.

Sharps (needles, broken glass, etc.) Disposal Procedures

Sharps may be contaminated with blood or bodily fluids. Under no circumstances should students be allowed to handle sharps. Once a sharp has been located on school division property an adult who is familiar with this policy should be dispatched to remove the item as quickly as possible from the school grounds. Sharps and needles should be picked up using a mechanic's retriever or kitchen tongs. If an employee is picking up sharps or needles by hand, then puncture resistant gloves must be worn. The recapping of needles is not recommended. As well, needles shall not be clipped, bent, broken or removed from the syringes. The sharps and needles must be placed in an approved sharps container located in the caretaker's office in each school.

School administrators in schools that involve their students in playground clean-up activities or community "clean-a-thons" must ensure that students wear gloves. Prior to participation in these clean-up activities students should be warned of the dangers of needles, sharps and other potentially dangerous items.

Significant exposure procedures:

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Determine if exposure is significant (see above definition).

Get first aid immediately - flush thoroughly.

Report the incident to appropriate supervisors

Seek medical attention immediately if a significant exposure occurred – preferably within 2 hours. Timely assessment is necessary for the initiation of preventative medication and/or vaccination.

Note:

Blood or bodily fluid contact with intact skin is not considered to be a risk for the spread of bloodborne pathogens.

This Regulation replaces the original Operational Procedures 11006 and OP25002.

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