

Bloodborne Pathogens

General Safety

Employees in many different occupations are at risk of exposure to blood-borne pathogens, including Hepatitis B, C and HIV/AIDS. First aid team members, housekeeping personnel in some settings, nurses and other healthcare providers are examples of employees who may be at risk of exposure. Review the following safety tips with your employees.

Tool Box Tips

WHAT IS A BLOODBORNE PATHOGEN?

Blood-borne pathogen means pathogenic micro-organisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

- Prevent exposure to the eyes, nose and mouth.
- Use surgical gloves to protect hands.
- Use a gown to protect the body and clothing.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- All first aid kits should have personal protective equipment available for first aid providers.
- All patient care rooms should have personal protective equipment available for nurses and physicians during a medical emergency.

IMMEDIATELY AFTER EXPOSURE TO BLOOD

- Flush material from the skin.
- Wash needle sticks and cuts with soap and water.
- Flush splashes to the nose, eyes and skin.
- Irrigate eyes with water, saline or sterile flush.
- Report the exposure immediately.

PROMPT REPORTING IS ESSENTIAL

- Do not postpone reporting.
- Immediate treatment is necessary to prevent blood-borne pathogen transmission.
- Post exposure treatment may be recommended and started immediately.

These advisory materials have been developed from national standards and sources believed to be reliable, however, no guarantee is made as to the sufficiency of the information contained in the material and Missouri Employers Mutual Insurance Company assumes no liability for its use. Advice about specific situations should be obtained from a safety professional.