

# *Just the Facts...*

## *Bloodborne Pathogens – Work Practice Controls*

### **Personnel must-**

#### ***Practice universal precautions***

- Treat all human blood and other potentially infectious materials (OPIM) as if contaminated with bloodborne pathogens.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Wash hands and skin with warm water and soap immediately after
  - Any contact with blood or OPIM.
  - Removing gloves, even if gloves appear to be intact.
- Use waterless antiseptic hand cleansers when handwashing facilities are not available, and wash hands immediately when warm water and soap do become available.

#### ***Avoid mucous membrane and skin contact***

- Avoid touching skin, mouth, nose, eyes, or any skin lesions or cuts with contaminated gloves, fingers, or other contaminated items or surfaces.
- Cover cuts, abrasions, or other skin lesions with an appropriate bandage prior to donning PPE.

#### ***Contain and confine blood and OPIM***

- Place human remains and disassociated portions in plastic burial pouches or ziplock bags.
- Avoid, or at least keep to a minimum, splashing, splattering, and generation of aerosols.

#### ***Manage sharps properly***

- Be alert for sharp objects, such as bones, broken glass, metal, knives, etc.
- Store reusable sharps in a manner to prevent lacerations or puncture wounds.
- Use mechanical means to clean up broken glass and other sharp objects.

#### ***Disinfect contaminated equipment and environmental and working surfaces***

- Use protective covers on equipment and work surfaces that are difficult to decontaminate.
- Disinfect all interior and exterior surfaces of reusable equipment and regulated medical waste (RMW) containers between uses.
- Maintain a cleaning schedule, which requires the cleaning of work surfaces, equipment surfaces, and waste containers:
  - After completion of procedures.
  - Immediately or as soon as possible when surfaces become overtly contaminated.
  - After any spill of blood or OPIM.
  - At the end of the work shift.

#### ***Handle contaminated PPE and clothing properly***

- Wear protective gloves and other appropriate PPE, including gowns, aprons, eye protection, disposable head covers, disposable shoe covers as needed to prevent exposure when handling contaminated PPE.

- Never wear contaminated PPE and clothing outside of the work area.
- Remove and replace PPE and underlying clothing immediately or as soon as possible when they become damaged or penetrated by blood or OPIM.
- Remove contaminated PPE and clothing in a manner to avoid contact with skin, mucous membranes, and underlying clothing.
- Place contaminated reusable PPE and clothing into leak-resistant bags or containers immediately upon removing the articles.
- Use bags and containers that are either color-coded red or labeled with the fluorescent orange or orange-red biohazard warning symbol.
- Never wash contaminated PPE and clothing with personal laundry.
- Wash and dry reusable PPE and clothing according to the instructions on their labels, in hot water at least 160°F and detergent for 25 minutes, or with chemicals at the proper concentration for low temperature washing.
- Place contaminated disposable PPE and clothing that is saturated, dripping, or caked with dried blood into a RMW container.
- Use an EPA-approved disinfectant to decontaminate reusable gloves, protective eyewear, face shields, and similar PPE. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for disinfectant concentrations and contact times.
- Brush scrub contaminated boots and leather goods with soap and hot water.

#### ***Clean up spills of potentially infectious materials***

- Clean up spills immediately.
- Remove visible material with absorbent disposable towels.
- Decontaminate the area using clean towels and an appropriate EPA-approved disinfectant, such as a 1:100 solution of bleach and tap water (approximately 1/4 cup bleach per gallon of tap water).
- Allow area to air dry.
- Dispose of absorbent towels and other waste in an appropriate RMW container.
- Wear appropriate PPE.
- Wear disposable latex, polyvinyl chloride (PVC), or vinyl gloves.

- Wear eye and face protection, and an impervious gown or apron if splashing is likely.
- Wear shoe covers when cleaning up large spills.
- Keep a commercial or domestic spill kit available. This kit should contain-
  - One pair of splash-proof safety goggles.
  - One disposable face mask.
  - Two pairs of disposable latex gloves.
  - One disposable apron.
  - One pair of disposable shoe covers.
  - Absorbent disposable towels.
  - Disinfectant (and its material safety data sheet).
  - Two red plastic bags with twist ties.
  - A scoop or scraper.
  - Waterless antiseptic hand cleanser.

#### ***Practice good personal hygiene***

- Never consume food or beverages in areas where exposure to blood or OPIM exists.
- Never store food and beverages in an area where they or their containers may become contaminated with blood or OPIM.
- Refrain from handling personal items, such as pens and combs, to prevent soiling or contamination.

#### ***Use chemicals safely***

- Follow the chemical manufacturers' directions on the chemical's warning label and material safety data sheet for safe handling, storage, and use.

#### ***Supervisors must-***

- Whenever possible, provide handwashing facilities stocked with soap, tepid water, and paper towels.
- Make provisions for laundering contaminated clothing and disinfecting PPE.
- Ensure adequate supplies such as RMW containers, laundry bags, disposable PPE, disinfectants, and spill clean up materials are readily available
- Oversee that personnel adhere to recommended safe work practices.

For further details, see USACHPPM TG 190.