

Additional Notes on Blood-Borne Pathogens

Precautions to prevent transmission of blood-borne pathogens.

Standard precautions apply to blood, all body fluids, secretions, excretions (except sweat), nonintact skin, and mucous membranes.

- If, at any time during a clinical experience, you are unsure about which precautions are necessary, IMMEDIATELY contact your instructor. It is YOUR responsibility to obtain the information you need to safely care for clients.
- Hand washing
 - Hands are washed between client contacts; after contact with blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions, and after contact with equipment or articles contaminated by them; and IMMEDIATELY after protective apparel is removed.
- Apparel
 - Masks are worn when respiratory secretions, blood, or body fluids may come in contact with the mouth and nose.
 - Gowns are worn when soiling of clothing with blood or body fluids may occur.
 - Gloves are worn when contact with blood, body fluids, or mucous membranes may occur.
 - Goggles are used to prevent blood or body fluid from coming into contact with the eyes or there is a possibility of blood or body fluids splattering. Masks are worn whenever goggles are needed.
 - All apparel is disposed of in trashcans BEFORE leaving the room
- Patient care items
 - All dressings, tissues, and other disposable items soiled with blood or body fluids should be placed in a plastic bag prior to disposal. Red bags are used when items are soaked or caked with blood or body fluids.
 - Laboratory specimens are placed in bags according to agency policy.
 - Body fluids are NEVER poured into a sink without a flushing device.
 - Bleach solution of one part bleach mixed with nine parts water, or a commercially available solution, should be used to disinfect surfaces contaminated with blood or body fluid.
 - All linen should be placed in appropriate bags before disposal down a linen chute or in a linen cart.
- Articles and equipment
 - Needles are NEVER recapped, bent or broken by hand. They must be placed in prominently labeled, puncture resistant containers.
 - Reusable equipment is bagged and labeled with a biohazard tag if contaminated with blood or body fluids
 - The patient's chart should not come into contact with objects that may be contaminated.

Steps to be taken in case of accidental exposure to blood-borne viruses

- IMMEDIATELY notify your clinical instructor. Your instructor will help you follow the clinical agency guidelines for accidental exposure.
- Complete the agency and School of Nursing incident reports with the help of your instructor.
- Make a follow-up appointment with the University Student Health Services (314-977-2323) as soon as possible after the incident. Even if you have a private health care provider, you must go to Student Health.