

SAFETY BREAKS

Name: _____ Date: _____

Location: _____ Your Safety Concerns: _____

Discussion Leader: _____

Today's Topic: Bloodborne Pathogens

Bloodborne pathogens (BBPs) are microorganisms that live in the bloodstream and cause disease. Common BBPs include Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and HIV. These diseases can be transmitted through contact with an affected person's blood or other bodily fluid. At the workplace, two activities that could result in exposure are performing first aid and cleaning up blood after an accident.

UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

"Universal precautions" means that we treat all blood as if it is infected with a BBP. This means that we take the proper precautions even if we think we know the person who is bleeding doesn't have any BBPs. We assume everyone is a carrier even if we've known them for years. The truth is, you never can be 100% sure someone doesn't have a BBP, so protect yourself.

GLOVES

PPE is a critical part of universal precautions. Anytime we are going to be around blood, we must use gloves. The gloves must be medical-grade, disposable gloves. Gloves must be disposed of properly after each use. Gloves can never be used twice.

OTHER PPE

Besides gloves, other PPE may be necessary. If a large spill must be cleaned up, it may be necessary to don other PPE, such as safety glasses, to protect our eyes. We may also need PPE, such as an apron and boots, to keep blood off our clothes.

RESPONDING TO AN EVENT

First, no one should ever respond to an event where there could be blood exposure unless they are properly trained to protect themselves and clean up properly. When responding, you must make sure you watch out for yourself first. It sounds selfish, but you need to make sure you are protected before helping a coworker.



Remember, universal precautions means we treat all blood as if it is infected. Get your PPE before responding to a spill.

CLEANING UP

It is essential that we use the proper equipment to clean up blood. Just using soap and water is not good enough. The best method is to use a 1:10 solution – 1 part bleach to 10 parts warm water. This will kill all bloodborne pathogens. There are also a number of commercial products available in a spray bottle that can be used. Make sure all contaminated materials including gloves are disposed of properly. This means in a bag designated for BBP contaminated materials. Anything that is not disposable must be cleaned properly.

AFTER THE EVENT

Always wash your hands after you take your gloves off, even if you didn't get any blood on your hands. You want to be sure there is no contamination. If you got blood in your eyes or an open wound, report this to your supervisor immediately. An assessment will be made.

Always use universal precautions!

What does "universal precautions" mean?

What are some common bloodborne pathogens?

What employees here are trained to respond to blood spills?

