

Universal Precautions to Prevent Transmission of Infection

The Board is aware of and concerned for the need for control of infectious diseases. This need is well-documented and is desirable for health, economic, and educational considerations. Universal precautions are intended to prevent transmission of infection, as well as decrease the risk of exposure for school personnel and students, and shall be followed as a normal course of action.

Universal Precautions to Prevent Transmission of Infection

I. Guidelines

- A. Universal precautions pertains to blood and other potentially infectious body fluids containing blood.
- B. These precautions shall apply to other body fluids and wastes such as saliva, sputum, feces, tears, nasal secretions, vomitus and urine because these other bodily fluids and waste can be a source of infections and should be handled as if they are infectious.
- C. The single most important step in preventing exposure to and transmission of any infection is anticipating potential contact with infectious materials in routine as well as emergency situations.
- D. Based on the type of possible contact, school personnel and students should be prepared to use the appropriate precautions prior to the contact.
- E. Diligent and proper hand washing, the use of barriers, appropriate disposal of waste products and needles, and proper decontamination of spills are essential techniques of infection control.
- F. Since it is not currently possible to identify all infected individuals, precautions must be used with every individual.

II. Responsibility

- A. The school nurse is responsible for reviewing Universal Precautions at an annual faculty meeting as a regular update for the building staff.
- B. The Coordinator of Buildings, Grounds, and Transportation will be responsible for the management of infectious waste disposal program in compliance with state and federal regulations.
- C. The school nurse and the Coordinator of Buildings, Grounds, and Transportation will work in conjunction to provide proper barriers, proper decontamination of spills and in evaluating and carrying out the district infection control program.

III. Techniques of Infection Control

A. Hand Washing

- 1. Proper hand washing is crucial to preventing the spread of infection.
 - a. Hands should be washed before and after physical contact with individuals, whether gloves are used or not.

- b. Hands or other skin should be washed immediately after physical contact with blood or body fluids and before touching anything else.
- c. If hands or other skin come into contact with blood or body fluids in a situation where hand washing facilities are not available, immediately use antiseptic towelettes to clean hands, and as soon as possible, wash hands with soap and water.

B. Barriers

1. Barriers anticipated to be used at schools include disposable gloves, non-absorbent materials, and resuscitation devices.
2. The use of barriers is intended to reduce the risk of contact with blood and body fluids, as well as to control the spread of infectious agents from individual to individual.
3. Established procedures should be used to remove barriers when they become contaminated or damaged, or immediately after finishing the task.

C. Disposal of Waste

1. Blood, other potentially infectious body fluids and waste, used gloves, barriers, and absorbent materials should be placed in special containers labeled for disposal of infectious waste, using established procedures for disposal of infectious waste (regulated waste).
2. As a general guide, special disposal as regulated waste is required when blood or other potentially infectious waste is liquid, semi-liquid, caked, not absorbed in materials, and capable of releasing the substance if compressed.
3. A band-aid, towel, sanitary napkin, diaper, or other product that absorbs waste and does not have the potential of releasing the waste if compressed would not be considered regulated waste.
4. Needles, syringes and other sharp disposable objects should be placed in a special puncture-proof container and disposed of as regulated waste.
5. Bodily wastes such as urine, vomitus or feces should be disposed of in the sanitary sewer system.

D. Clean Up

1. Spills of blood and other potentially infectious material should be cleaned up immediately using approved procedures.

2. Soiled materials or other potentially infectious materials should be handled, cleaned, or disposed of using regulated waste guidelines.

E. Exposure

1. Immediate attention (washing, treating, reporting) is required when an individual(s) has come into contact with blood or other potentially infectious material through exposure to or contact with an injured person.
2. The exposure shall be reported immediately to the school nurse. A building administrator and the parent or guardian shall be notified as soon as possible and directed to a physician for evaluation.