912 - Blood Borne Pathogens and Body Fluids Policy

Effective: September 2000
Revised: March 2025

Applicability:

This policy applies to all faculty, staff, students, visitors or volunteers of the University who in the course of their duties may come in contact with blood borne pathogens or body fluids.

Policy Statements:

1. When duties present risks of exposure to blood and certain body fluids, routine practices shall be used. (See glossary on routine practices).
2. Departments shall have written safe work procedures to manage work with blood and body fluids.
3. All such procedures shall be communicated to those whose duties may cause them to come in contact with blood borne pathogen or body fluids, even when wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
4. Occupational Health and Wellness (OHW) shall be available for consultation as needed, when planning duty specific routine practices.
5. Immunization is recommended for all University personnel having emergency response as an essential duty of their jobs, for health care professionals, and for all University personnel who will be handling human blood or body fluids.
6. Vaccine Recommendations:
    1. Tetanus immunization, hepatitis A and B vaccine: Persons working with untreated (raw) sewage.
    2. Hepatitis B vaccine: Persons that might be exposed to human blood, body fluids, tissues.
7. Post exposure protocols:

Sharp injury: allow wound to bleed for a few seconds, wash area with water, cover with sterile bandage. and seek medical attention.

Wound care: clean affected area with running water, cover wound using sterile bandage or dressing to protect against contaminants. Look for signs of infection: redness, warmth/swelling, and drainage at wound site, fever or chills. Seek medical attention.

8. The University of Guelph Illness or Injury Incident reporting process [1] shall be followed in the event of an incident that may result in exposure to blood borne pathogens and medical aid should be sought immediately.

9. Research activities involving the use of human blood or blood components, shall be reviewed and approved by the University Biosafety Committee.

Glossary:

Blood borne pathogens

Micro-organisms in blood and certain body fluids that cause disease in humans; the viruses of most concern are HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C.

Body Fluids

A fluid or fluid secretion (such as blood, lymph, saliva, semen, or urine) of the body

Hepatitis A (HAV)

The virus that causes liver inflammation (hepatitis); there is no cure for disease from HAV.

Hepatitis B (HBV)

The virus that causes liver inflammation (hepatitis); there is no cure for disease from HBV.

Hepatitis C (HCV)

The virus that causes chronic hepatitis, liver scarring, and liver cancer; there is no cure for disease from HCV.

HIV

The human immunodeficiency virus is a lentivirus that causes HIV infection and over time acquired immunodeficiency syndrome.

Tetanus

The bacteria clostridium tetani (C. Tetani) is acquired through infection of a cut or wound that causes muscle contractions, particularly of your jaw and neck muscles.

Routine Practices

Routine practices are a set of infection control strategies and standards designed to protect workers from exposure to potential sources of infectious diseases. Routine practices are based on the premise that all blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions, mucous membranes, non-intact skin or soiled items are potentially infectious. These practices, while mainly adopted by healthcare providers, apply to all professions in which workers may become exposed to infectious microorganisms through contact with blood and body fluids. Examples of these professions include police officers, trauma/crime scene clean-up crew, zookeepers, laboratory technicians, and embalmers. There are 5 major components to routine practices. They are risk assessment, hand hygiene, personal protective equipment, environmental and administrative controls.

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