

Guidelines For Universal Precautions

“Universal Precautions” are infection control guidelines designed to protect individuals from exposure to diseases spread by blood and certain body fluids.

Most of the time, you cannot recognize that someone is infected with a disease that can be transmitted to others. Often an individual does not yet know that he/she has an infectious disease or is a carrier of a disease. The best thing to do is treat the blood and body fluids of EVERY PERSON as POTENTIALLY INFECTIOUS. All individuals should apply universal precautions in all setting and at all times.

If exposed to blood and other body fluids:

- Wear vinyl or rubber disposable gloves when handling blood or body fluids.
- Refer any spills to housekeeping promptly for proper clean up using absorbent material, such as paper towels, then cleaning thoroughly with a disinfectant such as a solution of 10 parts of water to 1 part of household bleach. Clean any equipment used in the clean up, such as mops or buckets, with a bleach solution.
- Discard gloves and any other materials in a plastic bag or trash can lining which can be secured and disposed of daily.
- Wash hands with soap and water after discarding used gloves
- Launder any contaminated clothing with soap and water separately from other clothing. The addition of bleach will further reduce the risk of potential infection.

If no gloves are available and your hands come in contact with any body fluids, wash your hands and any other affected skin area for 20 seconds with soap and water.

Hand washing is the best single way to prevent the spread of germs from one person to another. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Rinse hands thoroughly and dry them with paper towels or a blow dryer.

Contact your health care provider with questions or concerns about exposure.