



BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

Exposure to blood, body fluids, and other potentially infectious materials (OPIM) can be hazardous. Blood and body fluids, for example, may contain bloodborne pathogens—microorganisms that can cause illness and disease. These microorganisms and viruses such as Hepatitis A, B, and C are transmitted through contact with contaminated blood and body fluids.

HEPATITIS A, B, AND C

All forms of the hepatitis virus cause inflammation of the liver that affects its ability to function. This is significant because the liver performs hundreds of tasks that are essential, such as fighting off infections, stopping bleeding, removing drugs and other poisons from the blood, and storing energy that will be used when later needed.

HOW IS HEPATITIS TRANSMITTED?

It is spread when blood or body fluids from an infected person enter the body of a person who is not immune. Hepatitis A can be transferred by a lack of handwashing, while B and C can be transmitted from accidental punctures from needles or contaminated glass.

TREATMENT FOR CUTS OR PUNCTURES

If you are stuck by a needle or other contaminated glass or get blood or OPIM in your eyes, nose, mouth, or on broken skin:

- + Wash affected area thoroughly.
- + Report the incident to your supervisor, complete an incident report form, and promptly begin a medical follow-up.
- + Arrange for an immediate medical evaluation.



WAYS TO SAFELY HANDLE NEEDLES:

The best way to prevent cuts and sticks from sharps is to minimize your contact with them.

Follow these safety precautions when handling, storing or disposing of needles or broken glass:

- + Never reach into a contaminated sharps container.
- + Never shear or break contaminated sharps.
- + Do not bend or recap needles, use pliers from maintenance or tongs to retrieve needles or broken glass.
- + Discard contaminated needles and sharps immediately into red sharps containers.
- + Do not clean or wipe out sharps containers, send the whole container out for disposal.
- + Do not stick hands under the mattress when stripping linen, instead pull linen from the corners.
- + Lift sofa cushions from the top to inspect for hidden needles.
- + Do not reach into dresser drawers or between slot machines, unless you first visibly check for needles.
- + Before performing maintenance on stoves, air conditioners, bathroom fans, and toilets, visibly check for hidden needles.
- + Do not push trash down with bare hands, use a push stick.
- + Be careful handling trash bags to prevent accidental cuts to the legs.

DECISION POINT: WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU OBSERVED...

Observation	Action
Vomit on the bathroom floor.	<div>+ Contact your supervisor.</div> <div>+ Solicit help from employees trained in BBP cleanup.</div>
Needles in the trash can.	<div>+ Use forceps, tongs or pliers and place in a sharps container on the cart.</div> <div>+ Use cut-proof gloves.</div>
Needles in a soda can.	<div>+ Use tongs or pliers to pick up and place in a sharps container on the cart.</div> <div>+ Use cut-proof gloves.</div>
Bloody towels or sheets.	<div>+ Contact your supervisor.</div> <div>+ Solicit help from employees trained in BBP cleanup.</div> <div>+ Use rubber or nitrile gloves.</div>
Broken glass in the sink or trash can.	<div>+ Use tongs or pliers to pick up and place in a sharps container on the cart.</div> <div>+ Use cut-proof gloves.</div>
Broken glass concealed in a hand towel.	<div>+ Use tongs or pliers to pick up and place in a sharps container on the cart.</div> <div>+ Use cut-proof gloves.</div>
An employee with an actively bleeding cut on their body.	<div>+ Contact your supervisor.</div> <div>+ Solicit help from employees trained in first aid.</div> <div>+ Use rubber or nitrile gloves and apply direct pressure.</div>

