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POLICY TITLE: BLOOD, BODY FLUID, AND HAZARDOUS EXPOSURE POLICY AND PROTOCOL

Policy

It is the policy of the University of Houston that any student engaging in a university sponsored program receive prompt medical attention, counseling, advisement and follow-up testing, if indicated, upon sustaining a skin injury from needle stick/sharps or mucous membrane splash from potentially contaminated person's blood or bodily fluids.

Exposure to another person's blood or body fluids by needle stick, splash or other exposure may place the student at risk for exposure to HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C or other infectious agents. Students are expected to follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations for Standard Precautions to reduce the risk of exposure.

Step 1 – Immediate Treatment Protocol

Percutaneous and Non-Intact Skin Injuries – Injuries from needles or other sharp objects where the integrity of the skin has been broken or where there is the suggestion that the integrity of the skin has been broken by a potentially contaminated item:

1. Wash the skin exposure site well with sudsy soap and running water. (Soap directly reduces the virus's ability to infect.)
    a. If water is not available, use alcohol.
    b. Avoid using damaging substances such as bleach.
2. Remove any foreign materials embedded in the wound, if possible.
3. Do not bleed tissue (There is no evidence that squeezing the wound reduces the risk of viral transmission).
4. Rinse well.
5. Proceed to Step 2 below.

Mucous Membrane Exposures – Exposures of eyes, nose or mouth to blood, bodily fluids or other potentially contaminated items:

1. Treat a splash to the eye or mouth immediately with a water/bath rinse to the area with tap water, sterile saline or sterile water.
2. Proceed to Step 2 below.

Intact Skin Exposure – Where there is no suggestion that the integrity of the skin has been compromised by contaminated fluids:

1. Thoroughly clean and wash exposed intact skin.
2. Exposure of intact skin to potentially contaminated materials is not considered an exposure of any significant risk. Nor is the person considered to be exposed or in need of evaluation.
3. Proceed to Step 2 below.

Step 2 – Exposure Reporting Protocol

1. Notify the supervisory faculty member immediately. The faculty member will advise you.
2. Notify the Supervisor of the host facility immediately.

3. After notifying the Supervisor of the host facility and faculty, it may be necessary for you to follow host facility protocol, and obtain additional medical care and advice from your own health care provider.
    a. Remind others (while you seek immediate medical attention) to obtain consent and test source individual's blood/fluids (requesting a rapid HIV antibody test) immediately or as soon as possible if the individual is not on the premises.
    b. If the source individual is known to be infected with either HIV or HBV, testing need not be repeated to determine the known infectivity.
    c. Identify and document the source individual, unless identification is infeasible or prohibited by law.
4. Depending on the nature of the exposure, it may be necessary to begin post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) within hours of the exposure. For this reason, it is recommended that students seek medical advice immediately after informing the faculty member and the clinical supervisor of the host facility.
5. Within 24 hours of the incident, not later than the next business day, contact UH Environmental Health & Life Safety at (713) 743-5858 to report incident, and complete the UH Student/Visitor Accident Report Form. Submit one (1) copy to UH Environmental Health & Life Safety, one (1) copy to faculty, and one (1) copy for your permanent student records.

Student Financial Responsibility

Neither the host (clinical) agency nor the University is responsible for the cost of the care that is involved in the treatment, management or surveillance of exposure to blood or body fluids. UH students are financially responsible for all medical visits, lab tests and prescriptions ordered for treatment of an exposure.

Approved by CON Faculty Council: 08/14/2017

Approved by Dean Kathryn Tart: 08/14/2017