



BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

Course Summary Handout

Overall Purpose

The purpose of bloodborne pathogens training is to keep employees safe in the workplace from exposures to bloodborne diseases that can cause illness or death. Bloodborne pathogens are viruses or bacteria that can cause disease and infection which can be spread through blood and bodily fluids.

OSHA (Occupational Health and Safety Administration)

OSHA is charged by the federal government with the responsibility of health and safety enforcement, regulation, and recommendations. In 1991, OSHA began requiring bloodborne pathogens training for employees of certain industries to maintain health and safety.

HIV, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C

HIV, HBV, and HCV are the major bloodborne pathogens that employees should protect themselves from. All three of these are viruses can be spread through blood, vaginal secretions, semen, needles, from mother to child during birth and pregnancy, human bites, and possibly through breastfeeding.

HIV- Human Immunodeficiency Virus is the virus that causes AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). The symptoms of HIV include dizziness, nausea, vomiting, headache, sore throat, muscle/joint aches, constant infections, fever, lack of appetite, swollen lymph nodes, tiredness, weight loss, rashes on the trunk area, or display no symptoms at all. HIV attacks the immune system. Once the immune system is destroyed, infections that a normal, healthy person would generally be able to fight off, become fatal for the infected individual, who is then diagnosed with AIDS. Death then occurs from illnesses such as pneumonia. The incubation period for HIV is months to years. Many people carry the disease for years and spread it to others without any knowledge. The virus can live for up to 90 minutes outside of the body.

HBV- Hepatitis B is a virus that affects the liver. It can be fast acting (acute) or slow acting for a long period of time (chronic). Symptoms include yellow skin and eye color, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, lack of appetite, dark urine color, fever, headache, or no symptoms at all. It is possible for a person's own immune system to fight off acute HBV, but this is not always the case. Medications are available to help slow the liver damage caused by the virus. People who have had HBV but no longer show symptoms can still spread the virus. The incubation period is weeks to months and can live in blood for 7 days outside of the body.



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HCV- Hepatitis C has the same signs and symptoms as HBV and also affects the liver, but there is no cure and treatments are more limited. HCV is much more common than HBV and HIV. There are medications to help treat the virus. 80% of people who have HCV never show any symptoms and spread it to others with no knowledge. It is very common in prisons from unsanitary tattoo procedures, and other "activities" that may occur. This virus can live for 7 days outside of the body.

***Note-** Being that HIV, HBV, and HCV are also considered sexually transmitted diseases (STD's), condoms and dental dams should be used if you are not sure of the health status of your partner. However, these measures are not considered 100% effective and do not fully protect against HSV (herpes simplex virus) or HPV (the virus that causes genital warts).

Other Potentially Infectious Materials (OPIM)

These are materials or objects that may contain or be contaminated with bloodborne pathogens. This could include needles, razors, knives, surgical tools, tattoo and piercing equipment, used feminine sanitary napkin products, diabetic medication and testing supplies, broken glass, machinery, toothbrushes, used dental supplies, used medical cleaning materials and gloves, pedicure and manicure supplies, used bandages, and tweezers.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Gloves, masks, gowns, eyewear, shoe covers, etc. are items that should be used to protect yourself from possible exposures to bloodborne pathogens. OPIM should be handled correctly and with care in order to avoid accidents.

Exposure Control Plan (ECP)

Any Employers who's employees are at potential risk for exposure to bloodborne pathogens are required by law to complete an exposure control plan. This is a plan that contains information regarding safety practices, PPE, and what to do in an event that an employee has been exposed, as well as information regarding proper cleanup of the area. Employees should never enter an area that is unsafe. All spills, exposures, and accidents need to be reported. Exposure reporting is not only a requirement, but it is the law.

Injuries

If you are stuck with a needle or some other type of OPIM, remove the object from your skin, without causing further damage, and place it in the appropriate sharps container. Remove your glove and wash the area with water and liquid soap as soon as possible. Report the exposure right away and seek medical treatment.



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If a bodily fluid is spilled on your skin, wash the area with liquid soap and water right away, and discard any infectious material.

If a bodily fluid gets into a person's eye, flush the eyes out with water for at least 20 minutes and then wash your hands with liquid soap and water.

A proper, OSHA or EPA approved, spill kit should be used to clean up bodily fluid spills, such as blood, vomit, or urine. A solution of 10% bleach and 90% water in a spray bottle can also be used, or any EPA approved sanitizer. All contaminated materials should be placed in a proper biohazard sharps container or bag and disposed of properly.

Follow Up and Vaccinations

Be sure to gather and report as much information as possible, and follow up with proper medical care in case post-exposure medical testing and treatment is needed. If a person has a risk of being exposed to bloodborne pathogens, it is recommended that they receive the following vaccinations: HBV, rubella, measles, influenza, tetanus-diphtheria, polio vaccine, and varicella.

EPA - stands for Environmental Protection Agency