

GUIDELINES FOR STANDARD/UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS AND PROTECTION AGAINST EXPOSURE TO BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS IN HEALTHCARE SETTINGS

These guidelines apply to ALL employees and physicians in the hospitals, medical office buildings, regional laboratories and other regional services of the Kaiser Permanente Medical Care Program. Additional details are available in your facility's Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan. Ask your manager where it is located.

The Kaiser Permanente Medical Care Program mandates the use of Standard/Universal blood and body fluid/substance precautions for all patients and employees as recommended by California and Federal OSHA, the American Hospital Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). These guidelines are mandated to protect patients, employees and physicians from the occupational transmission of bloodborne infections, such as Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Hepatitis B Virus (HBV), and Hepatitis C Virus (HCV). Standard/Universal precautions must be strictly followed whenever there is the possibility of contact with blood or other potentially infectious material (OPIM) from any patient regardless of diagnosis. Failure to comply with Standard/Universal precaution practices will result in disciplinary action.

OPIM are defined as: semen, vaginal secretions, cerebrospinal fluid, peritoneal fluid, amniotic fluid, synovial fluid, pleural fluid, pericardial fluid, saliva in dental procedures, any body fluid that is visibly contaminated with blood and all body fluids in situations where it is difficult or impossible to differentiate between blood and body fluids.

STANDARD/UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

1. Blood and/or OPIM must be handled in a manner that minimizes splashing, spraying, splattering, and generation of droplets. The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) i.e. gloves, gown, eye shields, masks etc., is required to reduce the risk of occupational exposure. In addition to the use of PPE hand hygiene is required at the start of the work shift, and between dirty and clean procedures on the same patient. Hand hygiene is also required after: contact with equipment or environment that may be contaminated, using the restroom, eating, drinking, smoking, and applying cosmetics. It is required as well before and after: contact with patients and specimens, wearing gloves or other PPE, contact with mucous membranes, and preparing food. Hand hygiene may be accomplished with either waterless degermer or soap and water washing.
2. Gloves are required when anticipated hand exposure to blood and/or OPIM is anticipated. Examples include: venous access procedures (e.g. phlebotomy, IV starts), specimen collection, open wound contact and when handling or touching contaminated items or surfaces.
3. PPE such as gowns and disposable plastic aprons are required during procedures when splashing with blood and/or OPIM is anticipated. Scrubs are NOT PPE.
4. PPE such as masks, face shields, ventilation devices and protective eye wear are required during procedures when splashing, spraying, splatter or droplets of blood and OPIM to the eyes, nose or mouth is anticipated. Eyeglasses are NOT PPE.
5. N-95 NIOSH approved TB respirator masks are required for protection against tuberculosis. Fit testing must be done prior to use of the N-95 mask. Regular masks are required for protection against other airborne transmitted diseases such as chickenpox.

6. Used syringes and disposable sharps must be disposed of immediately at point of use in puncture resistant containers. Do not overfill the containers. Needles should not be recapped or manipulated in any way. If needles must be recapped, a one-hand scooping technique or recapping device must be used. Kaiser has standard sharps safety devices available, which must be used. The safety feature on sharps safety devices must be activated. Education regarding sharps safety devices is required before use.
7. Laboratory specimens must be processed and handled in a safe manner with gloves and placed into leak proof containers labeled with biohazard symbol when required.
8. Emergency resuscitation equipment such as ambubags, mouthpieces, pocket masks, and ventilation devices are required in resuscitation situations.
9. Hepatitis B vaccination is strongly recommended for all employees who have the potential for occupational exposure to blood and OPIM. This is administered in a series of three injections. It is highly effective and safe, and is offered free of charge to all employees.

EMPLOYEE HEALTH

Exposure to blood and/or OPIM via needlesticks, other sharps injury, mucous membranes or non-intact skin requires:

- immediate and thorough washing of the affected area,
- contacting your Manager/designee,
- seeking immediate medical evaluation, and
- contacting Employee Health for documentation of the exposure incident on the Sharps Log.