

Safety Tips

Bloodborne Pathogens Awareness

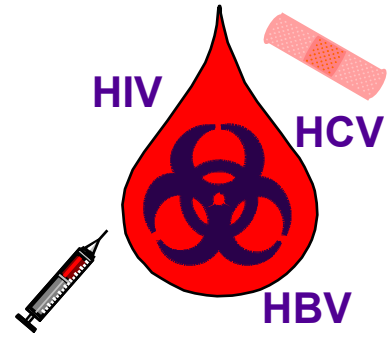
This safety tips sheet is for awareness purposes only and is intended for employees who are not anticipated to come into contact with blood or body fluids on the job, but should still be aware of how to protect themselves from the dangers of bloodborne pathogens.

What Are Bloodborne Pathogens (BBP)?

Bloodborne pathogens are disease causing organisms that are present in human blood and certain body fluids of infected individuals. These pathogens include the Hepatitis B Virus (HBV), Hepatitis C Virus (HCV), and the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV/AIDS). These viruses can be spread through contact with an infected person's blood, sexual contact, and through body fluid containing visible blood.

To contract HIV, HBV, or HCV the virus must get inside your body. These viruses are not spread through air, so you can't get them by being near someone who is infected or through casual contact. In the school environment the chance of becoming infected is small, but it could happen. Types of activities that place a person at risk of contracting bloodborne pathogens include tasks that may result in skin penetration by blood contaminated objects or the teeth of a student, blood contact with cuts and open wounds, contact with blood via the eyes, ears, nose, or mouth, or exposure to blood contaminated bodily fluids.

Bloodborne pathogens can be dangerous, but you can keep yourself safe and healthy and minimize your risk of contracting a disease by following universal precautions and getting the Hepatitis B vaccine.



Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)

HIV causes AIDS and there is currently no vaccine, but it is a fragile virus and there is very little chance of contracting it through an on-the-job exposure.

Hepatitis B Virus (HBV)

The Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) causes inflammation of the liver. Symptoms may include jaundice, fatigue, loss of appetite, abdominal pain, and flu-like illness. 10% of people with HBV develop long-term effects including chronic liver disease and liver cancer. A vaccination series is available to prevent contracting this disease.

Hepatitis C Virus (HCV)

Hepatitis C exhibits the same symptoms and outcomes as HBV. However, over 85% of those infected will become lifelong carriers that are able to infect others. Over 80% of those infected with HCV will develop chronic disease. There is currently no vaccine to prevent HCV.

OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Standard

Under the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens standard 29 CFR 1910.1030, Nassau BOCES has determined that most special education staff; custodial and maintenance staff; and health services staff may be at risk of exposure to bloodborne pathogens based on the specific job assignments of these employee groups. These employees and the provisions that apply to them are specified in the Nassau BOCES Exposure Control Plan available for review through the Office of the Safety Coordinator.



BIOHAZARD

How Can You Protect Yourself From BBPs?

Use Universal Precautions

The practice of Universal Precautions assumes that every person is a possible carrier of a bloodborne pathogen and that all blood and bodily fluids are known to be infected. By making this assumption, you can take appropriate precautions and utilize Personal Protective Equipment to prevent exposure to bloodborne pathogens.

- **Use good personal hygiene**
 - ☞ WASH YOUR HANDS
 - ☞ Keep soiled hands away from the eyes, nose and mouth
 - ☞ Do not eat, drink, smoke, apply cosmetics, or handle contact lenses where there is risk of exposure
- **Wear personal protective equipment and use other barriers to prevent direct contact with blood.**
 - ☞ Gloves
 - ☞ Safety goggles and masks
 - ☞ Protective clothing
- **Use good housekeeping practices**
 - ☞ Ensure that surfaces and reusable equipment are disinfected
 - ☞ Never use your hands to pick up broken glass and other sharp items. Use a broom and dustpan
 - ☞ Don't use your hands or feet to push down trash into a bag or can
 - ☞ Place blood soaked items in biohazard bags and containers available through the school nurse.

Consider HBV Vaccination

The Hepatitis B Vaccine is 95% effective in preventing Hepatitis B infection. This vaccination is a three (3) shot series administered over a six-month period. Minor side effects include soreness and swelling at the site of injection. It is not recommended for people allergic to yeast. The vaccination is thought to provide long-term immunity. There is currently no recommendation for booster shots for those people who have been vaccinated.

What If I Choose Not To Get The Vaccine?

Post-exposure vaccination is also available and is a viable alternative. This process provides identical protection to pre-exposure vaccination. This should start as soon as possible after exposure, but no later than 7 days after exposure. Your doctor will determine if post-exposure vaccination and disease prevention (also known as prophylaxis) is appropriate. If recommended, an initial injection of immune globulin will be given to temporarily boost your immunity. This will then be followed by the normal 3 shot series.

What Should I Do If I am Exposed?

If you believe you have had an exposure to blood, immediately notify your supervisor and fill out a Nassau BOCES Injury/Incident Report. The cost of any necessary related medical treatment will be covered under Nassau BOCES workers' compensation insurance plan.

DISCLAIMER: This Safety Tips Sheet is being provided for educational purposes only and addresses common reasons for accidents. It is not intended to imply fault or negligence on the part of any employee. It is the law, policy, and intent of Nassau BOCES to provide a safe and healthful workplace. However, the basic responsibility for safety and health rests with all BOCES employees. The measures contained herein can help employees to ensure their safety.

Although the information and recommendations contained in this Safety Tips Sheet have been compiled from sources believed to be reliable, the Office of the Nassau BOCES Safety Coordinator makes no guarantee as to the correctness, sufficiency or completeness of such information or recommendations. Other or additional safety measures may be required under particular circumstances.

For more information call the Safety Hotline 396-2400