

# NCDOT **Division One** Monthly Safety Trainer

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## **Blood Borne Pathogens**

*(Reference: NCDOT SPP 1910-13)*

<http://www.ncdot.org/doh/safety/sppm/chp17.pdf>

Exposures to blood and other body fluids occur across a wide variety of occupations. Health care workers, emergency response and public safety personnel, and other workers can be exposed to blood through needlestick and other sharps injuries, mucous membrane, and skin exposures. The pathogens of primary concern are the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis B virus (HBV), and hepatitis C virus (HCV). Workers and employers are urged to take advantage of available engineering controls and work practices to prevent exposure to blood and other body fluids.

The standard limits occupational exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials since any exposure could result in transmission of bloodborne pathogens, which could lead to disease or death. Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS), Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C are serious concerns for workers exposed to blood and other potentially infectious materials. Bloodborne pathogen exposure may occur in many ways, but needlestick injuries are the most common cause. Exposure may also occur through contact of contaminants with the nose, mouth, eyes, or skin.

“Bloodborne pathogens” means pathogenic microorganisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans. These pathogens include among others hepatitis B virus (HBV), which causes hepatitis B; human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which causes AIDS; hepatitis C virus and other pathogens, such as those that cause malaria.

Other potentially infectious materials could include the following human body fluids: semen, vaginal secretions, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid, pleural fluid, pericardial fluid, peritoneal fluid, amniotic 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 bodily fluids;

Any unfixed tissue or organ (other than intact skin) from a human (living or dead); and HIV-containing cell or tissue cultures, organ cultures, and HIV- or HBV-containing culture medium or other solutions; and blood, organs, or other tissues from experimental animals infected with HIV or HBV.

Treat all human blood and certain body fluids as if they are infectious. This must be observed in all situations where there is a potential for contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials.

Universal Precautions will be utilized to ensure NCDOT employees are safeguarded against the spread of infectious diseases through contact with human blood or other bodily fluids. Regardless of the “perceived” risk involved, all employees should protect themselves from potential infection. Below are NCDOT guidelines for exposure to bodily fluids:

- Any accident/incident involving the transfer of blood or bodily fluids should be reported by the supervisor before shift end.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be provided for and used by all employees considered to be at risk of infection.
- Gloves should be worn for touching blood and bodily fluids, mucous membranes or nonintact skin of all persons, for handling items or surfaces soiled with blood or bodily fluids, and for rendering assistance to injured persons. Always wash hands and arms after helping a victim.
- For those employees trained to perform CPR, separate yourself from direct contact with the victim by using a face shield or mask or one-way resuscitating device.
- Needlestick injuries should be reported to the supervisor immediately.
- Any items located that are believed to be human waste products (i.e., blood, soiled clothing, needles, or items identified with the universal biohazard symbol) should be handled only by a properly trained employee.
- All known items soiled with blood or other bodily fluids (i.e., clothing) should be disposed of by a properly trained employee.
- All equipment and working surfaces shall be decontaminated with an appropriate disinfectant to eliminate the potential for infection.
- NCDOT will provide at no cost Hepatitis B vaccination series to supervisors and those employees considered to be at the greatest risk of infection.
- A post-exposure evaluation will be provided at no cost to the employee.

Although it is unlikely that you will be exposed to any bodily fluids in the course of your work, if you as a good Samaritan choose to help someone that is injured, remember to always use appropriate PPE, such as gloves to protect you against the transmission of diseases.

For more information please visit OSHA's website at:

[http://www.nclabor.com/osha/etta/A\\_to\\_Z\\_Topics/BBP.pdf](http://www.nclabor.com/osha/etta/A_to_Z_Topics/BBP.pdf)

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2008-116/pdfs/2008-116.pdf>

