

As a healthcare provider, you're surrounded by germs on a daily basis. This puts you at risk of becoming infected. It also means that you could spread infections among your clients, or even to your loved ones. These germs are known as Bloodborne Pathogens. The most common and serious bloodborne pathogens are the **Hepatitis B Virus (HBV)**, **Hepatitis C Virus (HCV)**, and **Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV, the virus that causes AIDS)**. Workers exposed to these, and other bloodborne pathogens, are at risk for serious or life-threatening illness.

Transmission can occur when someone comes in contact with infected human blood or other body fluids. This may include contact with open cuts or sores, nicks and skin abrasions, a mucus membrane, or an accidental puncture from an infected needle or broken glass.

Prevent Germ Spread

Protect yourself and others by observing **Universal Precautions**. This means you treat **ALL** clients/consumers as if they were infected with a bloodborne pathogen. Components of Universal Precautions include:



1. Wearing **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** if you may be exposed to blood or other body fluids. This includes disposable gloves.
2. Washing your hands frequently and thoroughly, including before and after glove use.
3. Properly disposing of used PPE, sharps, and other waste material:
 - a. Dispose of sharps in a leak-proof, puncture-proof, marked container as soon as you are done with it. **NEVER** throw a sharp into the trash.
 - b. Dispose of contaminated waste in red or labeled bags.
 - c. **NEVER** reuse disposable gloves.
 - d. Contaminated broken glass should not be picked up with hands, but swept or brushed into a dustpan before disposal.
4. Decontaminate blood or body fluid spills with a 10% household bleach solution.

The Company's **Exposure Control Plan** outlines what you should do if you come in contact with a consumer's blood or body fluid. Some guidelines to follow are:



1. Wash the exposed area well with soap and water.
2. Get medical care immediately. Time can be crucial in preventing infection.
3. Report the exposure to the Company's 24/7 **Injury Hotline** at **888-541-1701** as soon as possible after the exposure.
4. In some cases (like HIV contact) you may want to be tested. It is not required but may tell you if you are infected. The Company's Exposure Control Plan discusses testing.

