

The following guidelines are meant to provide simple and effective precautions against transmission of disease for all persons potentially exposed to blood or body fluids. No distinction is made between body fluids from students with a known disease or body fluids from students without symptoms or with an undiagnosed disease.

### **Risk of Contact with Body Fluids**

The body fluids of all persons should be considered to contain potentially infectious agents (germs/microorganisms). The term "body fluids" includes: blood, semen, drainage from scrapes and cuts, feces, urine, vomitus, respiratory secretions (e.g., nasal discharge) and saliva. Contact with body fluids presents a risk of infection from a variety of germs/microorganisms. In general the risk is dependent on a variety of factors including the type of body fluid with which contact is made and the type of contact.

Body fluids with which one may come in contact usually contain many organisms, some of which may cause disease. Many germs may be carried by individuals who have no symptoms of illness. These individuals may be at various stages of infection: incubating disease, mildly infected without symptoms, or chronic carriers of certain infectious agents including the AIDS and hepatitis viruses. Transmission of communicable diseases is more likely to occur from contact with infected body fluids of unrecognized carriers than from contact with fluids from recognized individuals because precautions are not always followed.

### **Avoiding Contact with Body Fluids**

When possible, direct skin contact with body fluids should be avoided. Teachers, custodians, and administrators have access to disposable gloves. Gloves are required when direct hand contact with body fluids is anticipated (e.g., treating bloody noses, handling clothes soiled by incontinence, cleaning small spills by hand). Hands should be washed afterwards. Gloves used for this purpose should be put in a plastic bag or lined trash can, secured, and disposed of daily.

### **What To Do If Direct Skin Contact Occurs**

In many instances, unanticipated skin contact with body fluids may occur in situations where gloves may be immediately unavailable (e.g., when wiping a runny nose, applying pressure to a bleeding injury outside the classroom, helping a child in the bathroom). In these instances, hands and other affected skin areas of all exposed persons should be routinely washed with soap and water after direct contact. Clothing and other nondisposable items (e.g., towels used to wipe up body fluid) that are soaked with body fluids should be rinsed and placed in plastic bags. If presoaking is required to remove stains, (e.g., blood, feces), use gloves to rinse or soak the item in cold water prior to bagging. Clothing should be sent home for washing with appropriate directions to parents/teachers (see Laundry for Clothing Soiled with Body Fluids).

Contaminated disposable items (e.g., tissues, paper towels, and diapers) should be handled with disposable gloves.

### **Removal of Body Fluids**

All schools have standard procedures in place for removing body fluids (e.g., vomitus). These procedures are reviewed periodically to determine whether appropriate cleaning and disinfection steps have been included. All schools stock sanitary absorbent agents specifically intended for cleaning body fluid spills.

Disposable gloves should be worn when using these agents. The dry material is applied to the area, left for a few minutes to absorb the fluid, and then vacuumed or swept up. The sweepings should be disposed of in a plastic bag. Broom and dustpan should be rinsed in a disinfectant.

### **Hand Washing Procedures**

Proper hand washing requires the use of soap and water and vigorous washing under a stream of running water.

Soap suspends easily removable soil and microorganisms allowing them to be washed off. Running water is necessary to carry away dirt and debris. Rinse under running water. Use paper towels to thoroughly dry hands.

### **Laundry Instructions for Clothing Soiled with Body Fluids**

The most important factor in laundering clothing contaminated in the school setting is elimination of potentially infectious agents by soap and water. Addition of bleach will further reduce the number of potentially infectious agents. Clothing soaked with body fluids should be washed separately from other items.

APPROVED BY BOARD  
AND EFFECTIVE 3/7/88  
REVISED 5/19/03