

UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS



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Universal precautions are practices that help protect against many infectious diseases, such as AIDS or Hepatitis B. Universal precautions can help people avoid contact with blood and certain other bodily fluids. Universal precautions must be followed with all people one comes in contact with, since one cannot be sure who is infected.

Universal precautions should be taken with:

- Blood
- Urine
- Feces
- Saliva
- Sputum
- Wound drainage
- Tears
- Sweat
- Cerebrospinal fluid
- Vaginal secretions or discharge
- Semen
- Breast milk
- Anything wet that comes out of the body

∞ DO'S AND DON'TS OF UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

1. Wear gloves when coming in contact with body fluids, blood, and when handling contaminated articles such as lab specimens, dressings, and linens.
2. Wear masks, gowns, and/or goggles in addition to gloves, to protect you during procedures that may involve splashing of blood and/or contaminated body fluids.
3. Wash your hands with soap, running water, and rubbing prior to contact, immediately following contact, and after removing gloves. Wash hands immediately after contact with blood or any body fluids.
4. Place used disposable syringes, needles, and sharp items into a puncture resistant container.

☞ HOW TO WASH YOUR HANDS

1. Consider the sink, including the faucet controls, contaminated. Avoid touching the sink.
2. Turn water on using a paper towel and then wet your hands and wrists.
3. Work soap into a lather.
4. Vigorously rub together all surfaces of the lathered hands for 15 seconds. Wash around and under rings, cuticles, and fingernails.
5. Rinse hands thoroughly under a stream of water. Point fingers down so water and contamination won't drip toward elbows.
6. Dry hands completely with a clean, dry paper towel.
7. Use a dry paper towel to turn faucet off.
8. To keep soap from becoming a breeding place for microorganisms, thoroughly clean soap dispensers before refilling with fresh soap.
9. When hand washing facilities are not available at a remote work site, use appropriate antiseptic hand cleaner or antiseptic towelettes. As soon as possible, rewash hands with soap and running water.

Remember: Intact skin is your best defense against bacteria. Treat your hands well!

☞ WHAT TO AVOID WHEN WASHING HANDS

- DON'T use a standing basin of water to rinse hands
- DON'T use a common hand towel. Always use disposable towels.
- DON'T use sponges or non-disposable cleaning cloths unless you launder them on a regular basis, adding chlorine bleach to the wash water.

Remember: Germs thrive on moist surfaces!

MODES OF TRANSMISSION FOR COMMON ILLNESSES

- Airborne: Colds, Flu, Measles, Chickenpox, Smallpox
- Animals: Rabies (bite from an infected animal such as a dog, bat, or squirrel); Trichinosis (eating poorly cooked pork)
- Insect: Bubonic or black plague (bat or flea bites); Malaria (mosquito bites); Dysentery (common house fly)
- Contact: Mononucleosis, Venereal disease (syphilis, gonorrhea, etc.), Hepatitis, Tuberculosis, Poliomyelitis, MRSA (staph infection)
- Human: Typhoid Fever, Mumps, Impetigo, Whooping Cough
- Food: Dysentery, Botulism, E Coli, Worms, Salmonella
- Water: Typhoid Fever, Dysentery, Poliomyelitis
- Soil: Tetanus, Dysentery, Worms