

Universal Precautions in the School Setting

Sources:

www.osha

www.cdc

What are universal precautions?

- Practices of infection control to protect employees from exposure to blood and other potentially infectious material.
- Simple precautions that decrease the risk of spread of infection from one to another.
- All body fluids and all people are considered potentially infectious.

Why use Universal Precautions?

- Infected people may not look “sick”.
- Infected people may not know they are infected.
- Infected people may not disclose they are infected.

What are Body Fluids?

- Blood
- Saliva
- Tears
- Sweat
- Vomit
- Urine
- Feces
- Semen
- Vaginal secretions
- Respiratory secretions

Possible Infectious Agents

- Hepatitis A, B, and C viruses
- HIV
- Cytomegalovirus
- Rotavirus
- Salmonella
- Mononucleosis
- Influenza virus
- Meningococcal Bacteria

Universal Precautions Include:

- Using protective barriers correctly
- Washing hands thoroughly
- Cleaning contaminated surfaces
- Proper disposal of contaminated materials
- Custodians are trained and possess the appropriate materials to clean contaminated surfaces.

Use of Protective Barriers

- Protective barriers reduce the risk of exposure to the skin or mucus membranes to potentially infectious materials
- Protective barriers include: gloves, gowns, masks, goggles, and covering open wounds with bandages.

When to Wash Hands

- Before preparing and eating food
- Before and after wearing gloves
- After sneezing, coughing, blowing nose
- After going to the bathroom
- After contact with contaminated substances or surfaces
- After an injury (cut, scrape)

How to Wash Hands

- Use soap and warm water.
- Wash with soap for 15-30 seconds.
- Do not forget between fingers, back of hands, and under nails.
- Rinse well.
- Use paper towel to dry
- Turn off faucet with paper towel.
- Discard paper towel.

What About Hand Sanitizer?

- Alcohol-based gel may be used if hands are not visibly dirty.
- Must allow 10-15 seconds of contact between gel and hands.

Wear Gloves

- When handling contaminated substances or surfaces
- When cleaning contaminated substances or surfaces
- When anticipating contact with contaminated substances or surfaces

Summary

- Treat everyone as being potentially infectious.
- Treat every body fluid as being potentially infectious.
- Always use protective barriers.
- Always clean contaminated areas.
- Always wash hands thoroughly.