



Bloodborne Pathogens Quick Facts

What are Bloodborne Pathogens?

They are microorganisms which live in human blood and cause disease. Sweat, tears and urine do not carry these microorganisms.

What are the most common diseases I can get from exposure to blood?

Hepatitis B, a liver disease, and HIV, which causes AIDS, are the most common.

How can I become infected?

Infected blood must come into direct contact with broken skin or your eyes, nose, mouth—your mucous membranes. At the YMCA, the most common exposure to blood is giving first aid to our members or participants.

How can I prevent being exposed to blood?

Assume that anyone's blood can be infected. This is called "Universal Precautions." When you have to take care of someone who is bleeding or clean up a blood spill, you should wear protective equipment, including gloves, eye shield and anything else your facility recommends. Avoid touching your face. After you are done, thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water, even though you wore gloves. Use the same procedures when cleaning equipment, changing diapers, doing laundry, or other tasks that might bring you into contact with blood or feces.

What if blood gets on my skin?

If your skin is healthy and unbroken (no cuts or cracks), just wash with soap and water. Your skin will protect you from these diseases.

What if blood gets in a cut or in my eyes, nose or mouth?

This is called an "Exposure Incident." Notify your supervisor immediately and seek medical treatment. There are medical interventions that can protect you from Hepatitis B and some other diseases. You will receive testing and care. The chance that you will be infected is very small.

Where can I get more information?

Ask your supervisor or go to the federal OSHA website for more information:
www.osha.gov/SLTC/bloodbornepathogens