

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

There are three bloodborne pathogens you need to be aware of when dealing with blood and other body fluids:

- **Human Immunodeficiency Virus, or HIV**

HIV attacks a person's immune system, eventually destroying their ability to fight infection. A person may carry the virus and live a normal, healthy life for years. Some people infected with HIV go on to develop AIDS. Blood tests can diagnose this bloodborne disease, but no vaccine or cure has yet been developed.

- **Hepatitis B Virus, or HBV**
- **Hepatitis C Virus, or HCV**

Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C are both viral infections that affect the liver. Signs and symptoms may include: jaundice, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea and abdominal pain. An HBV or HCV infection can eventually lead to chronic liver disease, liver cancer or even death. The only way to detect HBV and HCV is through a blood test. There is a vaccine to protect you against HBV, however there is no vaccine for HCV.

HIV, HBV and HCV are all transmitted the same way: Through contact with an infected person's blood, through bodily fluid containing visible blood or through sexual transmission. To contract these diseases, the virus must get inside your body. They cannot spread through the air; they need a "doorway" into the body. Examples of doorways are:

- Sharing needles with an infected person
- Through a cut, scratch, razor nick, skin abrasion, dermatitis or acne
- Getting blood or body fluid in our eyes, nose or mouth
- Unprotected sex
- Touching a contaminated object and then touching your mouth, eyes, nose or an open cut

EUHSD has an exposure control plan. All employees receive bloodborne pathogens training when they are hired. Some quick tips:

- When exposed to blood or body fluids of another person, always treat the exposure as a risk of contamination. PROTECT YOURSELF! **Always** wear disposable latex or vinyl gloves when dealing with blood.
- Make sure you cover any cuts or skin abrasions on your hands with bandages before applying the gloves. Never reuse disposable gloves or use gloves that are damaged. Be sure you know the proper way to remove and dispose of gloves.
- After removing gloves, wash your hands with soap and warm water as soon as possible. Use a non-abrasive soap and warm water. Rinse completely and dry with a clean towel or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- If you need to give mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, protect yourself by using a pocket mask.

IF YOU HAVE NOT BEEN TRAINED IN THE PROPER PROCEDURE FOR CLEANING UP BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS, DON'T ATTEMPT TO CLEAN IT UP. GET A TRAINED EMPLOYEE TO TAKE CARE OF THE CLEANUP IMMEDIATELY.