Protect Yourself From Bloodborne Pathogens

What are Bloodborne Pathogens?
Bloodborne Pathogens are pathogenic microorganisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans. These pathogens include, but are not limited to, hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV), and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

How can bloodborne pathogens be transmitted?
Bloodborne pathogens are transmitted by contact with infected blood or other bodily fluids.

What are the routes of entry for bloodborne pathogens?
- Mucous membranes of the eyes, nose, and mouth
- Open sores
- Cold sores
- Cuts
- Abrasions
- Hangnails
- Any sort of damaged or broken skin such as sunburn, blisters, or rashes.
- Needle sticks

What are high-risk activities or areas?

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How can you protect yourself from bloodborne pathogens?
- Treat all bodily fluids as though they are infected.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when cleaning bodily fluids.
- Appropriate PPE depends on the situation but always includes non-permeable latex style gloves.
- Remove any rings or jewelry that could cut through the gloves.
- Place a band-aid over any open wounds, as an added layer of protection should the glove fail.
- When picking up sharp objects such as contaminated broken glass, use tongs or wear leather gloves over your latex gloves.
- Remove PPE in a manner that will not contaminate your bare skin and dispose of properly.
- Decontaminate all equipment (mops, sponges, buckets, etc.) used during the cleanup with an appropriate disinfectant before returning to storage or use.

What should you do if an exposure occurs?
- Immediately flush the exposed area with soap and water or a skin disinfectant if available. If fluids get in your eyes, irrigate them immediately with water or saline.
- Report the exposure immediately to your supervisor.
- Promptly seek medical attention.

For more information contact your supervisor or refer to District / Board Policy # EBBA.