

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

As sure as the sun comes up every day, children end up with scraped knees, cuts and bruises from the playground, in the classroom or on the playing field. Unfortunately, students are not immune to bloodborne diseases. You are in as much danger of infection from the students you work with as from any other group in society. As a school employee, you need to be aware of the potential danger of bloodborne pathogens.



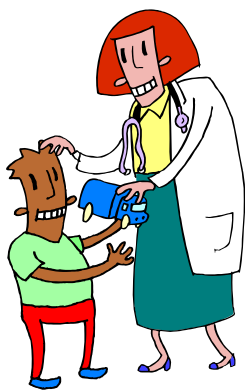
Bloodborne pathogens are microorganisms present in human blood and certain body fluids that cause human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis B virus (HBV) and many others. We are focusing on HIV and HBV because they are the most common.



The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has issued a standard that can protect you from bloodborne pathogens. OSHA has created a standard that provides you and the school system a method of working together to substantially reduce the risk of contracting a bloodborne disease on the job.



In an educational setting, the school system is required to identify the personnel whose job duties expose them to blood and potentially infectious body fluids. Not every educator is occupationally exposed to bloodborne pathogens while performing his or her job. However, it is important for everyone in an educational setting to understand the dangers of infection and the safe procedures to minimize risk.



HIV

Human immunodeficiency virus attacks the immune system. It lowers the body's ability to fight infection, allowing diseases to invade the body. AIDS is the most advanced stage of HIV. Signs and symptoms vary from person to person. They include chronic fatigue, lasting fevers, night sweats, shortness of breath and/or a persistent cough that does not result from a cold, flu or smoking. Sore throat and white spots or unusual blemishes in the mouth or unusual lumps or blotches on or underneath the skin may be present. HIV is transmitted primarily through sexual

contact, but also may be transmitted through contact with blood and some body fluids. HIV is not transmitted by touching or working around people who carry the disease.

HBV

Hepatitis B virus can cause Hepatitis B, a serious inflammation of the liver. If untreated, it can lead to cirrhosis and cancer of the liver. Permanent damage to the liver can result in death. However, only 20% of those exposed to HBV will develop Hepatitis B. Half of those infected with HBV show no signs and some never will. After exposure, symptoms may take one to six months to appear. Signs and symptoms include fatigue, fever, anorexia, nausea & vomiting, abdominal pain and jaundice.

HIV and HBV are only transmitted through **direct contact** with blood and other body fluids of an infected person.

4 body fluids most common in transmission of HIV and HBV:

Blood

Semen

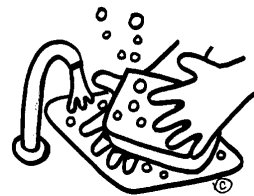
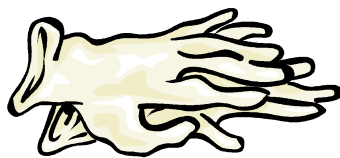
Vaginal secretions

Breast milk

HIV and HBV are not transmitted through saliva, sneezing or coughing, toilet seats, eating utensils or a casual kiss. It is also not found in urine, feces or vomit unless it is contaminated with infected blood. There must be contact with broken skin, such as cuts, nicks, skin abrasions, dermatitis and acne or the mucous membranes of your mouth, eyes or nose by infected blood or body fluid to transmit HIV or HBV.

Best prevention:

Universal Precautions!!! Assume that all blood/body fluids are infected (Even that cute little PRE-K student). You never know!! Use gloves anytime you may be in contact with someone's blood or body fluid. Gloves are located in every room in the First Aid Bag as well as the nurse's office. Wash your hands after removing your gloves and/or if you come in contact with someone's blood or body fluid. If you see that someone has contaminated any object (i.e.: desk, floor, walls, ball etc.) with blood or body fluids, please let the office or custodian know so that the object can be properly cleaned and disinfected with a 1:10 bleach solution. Basically, good hygiene plays an important role in the prevention of all diseases. Everyone should be washing their hands before eating, after using the restroom and after any known contact with blood or a body fluid. Also, if you know that you have an opening in your skin, such as a wound, please keep it covered with a Band-Aid for your protection and others'. Your skin is a natural barrier for your body. Microorganisms can not pass through your skin if it is intact, however, a microorganism can live on your intact skin and then be transmitted to an open area or mucous membrane if it is not cleaned after contact.



Remember: Contact or exposure does not mean that you have been infected. Don't panic! If you have been in **contact** with blood or the above listed body fluids, immediately wash the area well with soap and running water. If you have had an **exposure**, wash with soap and running water AND notify your campus nurse or immediate supervisor as soon as possible. The nurse or supervisor will determine the appropriate post-exposure evaluation and follow up according to the district's Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan (ECP). An exposure incident is defined as "a specific eye, mouth, other mucous membrane, nonintact skin, or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials that results from the performance of an employee's duties."

The Lorena ISD ECP is available to faculty and staff in the Administration Office and Middle School nurse's office. The ECP is required by OSHA. It is to include identification of personnel covered by the standard, potential hazards of each job description and identify measures that will be taken to reduce the risk of exposure to bloodborne pathogens on the job.