

UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

Since medical history and/or examinations cannot reliably identify persons who are infected with HIV or other bloodborne pathogens, blood and body fluid precautions should be consistently used for all injured persons. This approach is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control/AHA and is known as **Universal Precautions**.

1. Hands should be washed before and after contact with ALL patients, paying particular attention around and under fingernails and between fingers. If hands or skin surfaces accidentally come in contact with blood or body fluids they should be immediately washed with soap.
2. Gloves should be worn for contact with blood and body fluids (i.e. urine, stool, oral secretions, wound or other drainage) mucous membranes or other non-intact skin of ALL patients.
3. Gloves should be worn for performing veni-puncture and other vascular access procedures.
4. Gloves should be changed after contact with each patient. Hands should be washed immediately after gloves are removed.
5. Gowns should be worn when the soiling of clothes with blood or body fluids is likely.
6. Masks and/or goggles should be worn when it is likely that eyes and/or mucus membranes could be splashed with blood or body fluids (i.e. when suctioning a patient with copious secretions).
7. Discard uncapped needles, syringes and sharps in puncture resistant containers designed and labeled for this purpose. Containers should be in all patient care areas.