

## CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF

### CODE OF GUIDANCE

#### **HYGIENE PRECAUTIONS - BLOOD AND OTHER BODY FLUIDS**

This Code of Guidance outlines simple hygiene precautions to reduce the risk of infection from blood and other body fluids.

The basic rule is:

**AVOID ALL CONTACT WITH BLOOD AND OTHER BODY FLUIDS.**

This Code of Guidance addresses the following:

- 1.0 Procedure to clean up blood or other body fluids.
- 2.0 Soiled clothing
- 3.0 Accidental contact with blood and other body fluids
- 4.0 Hypodermic syringes and needlestick injuries.
- 5.0 Additional Advice to First Aiders.

#### **1.0 Procedure to clean up blood or other body fluids**

Should small quantities of blood or other body fluids be encountered, the following cleaning procedure should be adhered to:

Any spillage of blood, body fluids and excreta should be covered with paper towels and a 1% hypochlorite solution should be gently poured over the paper towels. If possible the disinfectant should be left in place for at least 30 minutes and then the area wiped up with more paper towels, all of which can be disposed of in small quantities via a water closet, or incinerated, or via the refuse system, in which case the towels should be put in a plastic bag which should be knotted and placed in another plastic bag which is also knotted.

- A 1% hypochlorite solution is obtainable from 1 to 10 dilution of a good quality household bleach with water, e.g. Domestos. This dilution is the same as undiluted Milton.
- If the strength of the bleach is unknown then as a general rule it should be diluted with no more than three parts of water.
- For general wiping of surfaces, a 0.1% hypochlorite solution is satisfactory.
- Rubber or plastic gloves and a plastic apron should be worn and subsequently disposed of by incineration or via the refuse system. The apron should be removed initially and placed into a plastic bag. Gloves should be removed by removed by peeling inside out and dropping into a plastic bag. The bag should then be knotted and placed inside another bag and disposed of in the normal manner.

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If large quantities of blood or other body fluids are encountered, specialist advice should be sought.

## **2.0 Soiled Clothing**

If clothing becomes soiled with blood or other body fluids, wash in the washing machine using a hot wash cycle. Clothes marked “dry clean only” may be safely dry cleaned.

If handling soiled linen or clothing, wear rubber or plastic disposable gloves. When disposing of gloves, they should be removed by turning inside out and placed into a plastic bag. Hands should be thoroughly washed.

## **3.0 Accidental contact with blood and other body fluids**

In the event of accidental skin contact with blood or other body fluids, the contaminated skin should be thoroughly washed immediately. If it is thought that blood or other body fluids have entered a cut or abrasion the wound should be cleaned with running water and covered with a waterproof dressing and medical advice sought. Accidental splashes of blood into the eye or mouth should be rinsed with water.

NB: In the event of accidental skin contact with blood or other body fluids, a record should be made in the Accident Book and an Accident Report Form completed.

## **4.0 Hypodermic syringes and needlestick injuries**

Should a hypodermic syringe be found it should not be touched unless absolutely necessary. If it is necessary to touch the syringe it should be lifted by the thick end and put into a container which cannot be punctured and this in turn should be placed in a plastic bag for disposal by Highways and Parks. The syringe should never be placed loose in the plastic bag. Gloves should be worn to lift the syringe and removed by turning inside out and placing in a plastic bag. Hands should be thoroughly washed.

In case of a needlestick injury (i.e. puncture of the skin by a syringe needle), encourage the wound to bleed, clean with running water and seek medical advice. Refer to Code of Guidance on Needlestick Injuries.

## **5.0 Additional Advice to First Aiders**

### **Protect existing wounds**

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Always cover any exposed cuts or abrasions on yourself with a waterproof dressing before treating any casualty.

If you have a skin blemish such as a cut, abrasion or eczema which cannot be effectively covered, it would be better to refrain from dealing directly with bleeding wounds. This would not preclude giving advice to colleagues also in attendance.

### **Prevent the spread of infection**

Always wash hands before and after administering first aid. If there is bleeding, wear disposable plastic gloves and, if necessary, a disposable plastic apron. In the case of small cuts, patients should be encouraged to apply dressings to themselves. Splashes of blood into eyes or the mouth should be washed out immediately with plenty of water.

### **Prevent new wounds**

Handle scissors and other sharp instruments carefully. If you do injure yourself or your patient, immediately encourage the wound to bleed by squeezing and then wash out thoroughly with soap and water.

Wash scissors, etc. in a 1% hypochlorite solution (i.e. undiluted Milton or 1 part bleach : 10 parts water).

### **‘Sharp’ material which has come into contact with blood**

Any “sharp” material which has come into contact with the patient’s blood e.g. nail or broken glass, should be quickly wrapped in newspaper, placed in a strong container which cannot be punctured. This can then be disposed of in the normal way.

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