

May 2008

# RM News & Notes

## Tip of the Week:

### BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

#### Various infectious diseases:

HIV  
Hepatitis A, B, C  
Tuberculosis  
Herpes  
Meningitis

#### Transmission Methods

Direct Contact  
Indirect Contact  
Air-borne  
Vector

#### Preventive Measures:

##### Immunizations

- DPT
- Polio
- MMR
- Influenza
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Hib Meningitis
- Chickenpox
- Tetanus
- Smallpox
- PPD

#### Personal Protective Equipment

Gloves  
Gowns  
Face shields  
One-way CPR masks  
Breathing devices

#### Precautions

Personal hygiene habits  
Work practice controls  
Clean-up  
Disinfecting

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Web Page

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## Message from the Risk Manager

For most of us exposure to a blood-borne pathogen is not a regular event in our daily lives and it's something we rarely, if ever, think about. However, we still need some basic knowledge to better protect ourselves in the event there is a potential for exposure, most likely in the form of a "good Samaritan" act when we voluntarily render first aid to a fellow employee, friend, family member or the general public. We don't want to be an alarmist, as the risk of disease transmission is small. When there has been an exposure, it is a good reminder to always use the best means of protection available and make informed choices. Remember, you cannot tell by looking at someone whether or not they have a communicable disease, so always assume the possibility is there and take precautions.

*Darlene*

## Basic Guidelines for Decontamination and Sterilization

All surfaces, tools, equipment and other objects that have been exposed to blood or other potentially infectious materials need to be decontaminated and sterilized as soon as possible. If it is a large spill or otherwise might be difficult to accomplish complete sterilization, it may be best to contract with a professional biohazard company that specializes in this type of cleanup. However, there are some general guidelines that you can follow to cleanup a smaller, more manageable area.

You may use a product specifically formulated for this type of cleaning or make your own solution of household bleach and water. The standard recommendation is to use at least a quarter cup of bleach to one gallon of water.

When cleaning a blood or fluid spill, carefully cover the spill with rags, paper towels or other absorbent materials and then gently pour the bleach solution over the material. By covering the spill with the absorbent materials, you reduce the risk of causing a splash when you pour the bleach solution on it. Allow the bleach solution to sit for at least 10 minutes to make sure any blood borne pathogens are killed before you actually start to clean up the area.

If you are cleaning equipment or other objects, you must again allow the disinfectant to remain in place for at least 10 minutes before continuing with the decontamination process.

Broken glass should never be picked up directly with the hands. Instead, sweep or brush the material into a dustpan and then place in a closeable, puncture resistant container. If the broken glass is visibly contaminated with blood, it should be sterilized with the bleach solution before it is disturbed or cleaned up.

Make sure you don't forget to decontaminate any cleaning supplies or equipment (mops, pails, etc.) you used.



### **Hygiene Practices:**

Hand washing is one of the easiest and most important practices to prevent transmission of blood borne pathogens. Hands and any other exposed skin should be thoroughly washed as quickly as possible after a possible exposure. Whenever possible, use soft anti-bacterial soap rather than harsh, abrasive soaps which could scratch or irritate sensitive skin. Even when you have used gloves or other protective equipment, hands should be washed as soon as possible once the gloves are removed.

## BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS



### Modes of Transmission

**Accidental puncture from contaminated needles and other sharps can result in transmission of Bloodborne pathogens.**

You cannot know for a certainty if blood or body fluid is infected with a blood borne pathogen so you must treat it as if it is. You should always use personal protective equipment and work practice controls to protect you from blood borne pathogens in every situation where exposure may occur.

**Personal Protective Equipment: To protect yourself, it is essential to have a barrier between you and the potentially infectious material.**

**Gloves:** Should be made of latex, nitrile, rubber or other waterproof materials. If the glove material is very thin or flimsy, use two pair for added protection. If you have cuts or other wounds on your hands, cover and bandage before putting on gloves as an added precaution. If a glove is torn or damaged – **don't use it.** Remember to remove your gloves carefully so that you don't touch bare skin with the outside or contaminated area of the glove and then dispose of them appropriately so that no one else can come in contact with them.

**Goggles:** Again, blood borne pathogens can be transmitted through the thin membranes of the eyes so it is important to use eye protection anytime there is the potential for splashing or vapors from contaminated fluids.

**Face Shields:** When worn in addition to goggles, face shields provide additional protection against splashes to the nose and mouth.

**Aprons:** Protect your clothing and prevent blood or other body fluids from soaking through to your skin.

**Other Options:** If you find yourself in a situation where you will come in contact with body fluids and you don't have the standard protective equipment readily available, improvise with what is available. Use a piece of clothing, towel, plastic bag or some other barrier to help avoid contact. If the victim is able to assist, provide the first aid materials, guidance and encouragement to aid themselves, such as by guiding them in putting direct pressure on a bleeding wound.

**Remember to treat all blood or potentially infectious body fluids as if they are contaminated. Avoid contact whenever possible and always wear protective equipment when avoidance is not possible.**

## Up Coming Events

Each program is advertised by Risk Management and is available to employees of Columbia County Board of Commissioners and the city employees of Grovetown and Harlem. Additionally, the Defensive Driving Courses may be attended by immediate family members of employees, on a space available basis, for a nominal fee.

**Pre-registration is required.**

For additional information or to register contact Risk Management. 706-312-7475

### Safety Review Board

**Fire Appling May 13 & 14, 2008**  
**Extinguisher 9:00**  
**Training 10:00**  
 (Each class 40 minutes: classroom and hands on training)

**Defensive Driving May 8, 2008**  
**Course – 8 hour May 27, 2008**  
**June 26, 2008**  
**July 22, 2008**

**Defensive Driving**  
**Course – 4 hour June 5, 2008**

**CPR/AED/First Aid May 29, 2008**

**County Office Closed May 26, 2008**

### MAY 2008

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### JULY 2008

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## Newsy Notes

### Mothers Day Trivia

Many of the sweaters worn by Mr. Rogers on the popular television show, Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood, were actually knitted by his real mother.

Kittens are born both blind and deaf, but the vibration of their mother's purring is a physical signal that the kittens can feel - it acts like a homing device, signaling them to nurse.

