



Incident Reporting Job Aid

Exposure incidents in the laboratory can occur at any time. Knowing and practicing the proper response and reporting procedures for incidents involving blood and other potentially infectious materials (OPIM) is important. These procedures are described below.

Exposed Worker – Immediate Exposure Incident Response

Immediately following exposure, the exposed worker must:

- A. **Needlestick and Cut Exposures:** Wash needlesticks and cuts with soap and water for **at least 15 minutes**.
- B. **Splash Exposure:** Flush splashes to the nose, mouth, or skin with water for **at least 15 minutes**.
- C. **Eye Exposure:** Irrigate eyes with clean water, saline, or sterile wash for **at least 15 minutes**.
- D. **All Exposures:** Promptly report all exposures to your supervisor to ensure that you receive appropriate follow-up care.

Employer of Exposed Worker – Postexposure Evaluation

Following worker exposure and reporting, the employer must:

1. Ensure an immediate, confidential medical evaluation and subsequent follow-up evaluation are available to the exposed worker. These evaluations must be completed according to the following specifications:
 - a. At no cost to the worker
 - b. At a time and place that is reasonably convenient for the worker
 - c. Under the supervision of a licensed physician or other licensed healthcare professional
 - d. According to the recommendations of the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) at the time the procedures take place
2. Offer the exposed worker postexposure prophylaxis for HBV, HCV, and HIV, when medically indicated, according to the recommendations of the USPHS.
3. Offer a postexposure follow-up that includes counseling the worker about their infection status and the possible implications of the exposure. Counseling should address test results and interpretations, along with information on how to protect personal contacts.
4. Perform a follow-up that includes an evaluation of reported illnesses that might be related to exposure.

References:

Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure. National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2007-157. Updated June 6, 2014. Accessed February 16, 2024. <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2007-157/default.html>

OSHA Fact Sheet: OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Incidents. Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Dept of Labor. January 2011. Accessed February 16, 2024. <https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/bbfact04.pdf>

This job aid is a component of the free, on-demand CDC training course “Fundamentals of Bloodborne Pathogens.” Find the course at reach.cdc.gov

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