

UPPER MERION AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
WELLNESS NOTES
GUIDELINES FOR UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

“Universal Precautions” are infection control guidelines designed to protect individuals from exposure to diseases spread by blood and certain body fluids.

Most of the time, you can not recognize that someone is infected with a disease that can be transmitted to others. Often, an individual does not yet know that he/she has an infectious disease or is a carrier of a disease. The best thing to do is treat the blood and body fluids of EVERY PERSON as POTENTIALLY infectious. All individuals should apply universal precautions in all settings and at all times.

Exposure to blood and other body fluids:

- Wear latex, vinyl or rubber disposable gloves when handling blood, body fluids, or when cleaning cuts, scrapes or wounds.
- Clean up spills promptly using absorbent material, such as paper towels, then clean thoroughly with a disinfectant such as a solution of 10 parts water to 1 part household bleach. Clean any equipment used in the cleanup, such as mops or buckets, with a bleach solution.
- Discard gloves and any other materials in a plastic bag or trash can lining which can be secured and disposed of daily.
- Wash hands with soap and water after discarding used gloves.
- Launder any contaminated clothing with soap and water separately from other clothing. The addition of bleach will further reduce the risk of potential infection.

If no gloves are available and your hands come in contact with any body fluid, wash your hands and any other affected skin area for 15-20 seconds with soap and water.

Handwashing is the best single way to prevent the spread of germs from one person to another. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water for at least 15 to 20 seconds. Rinse hands thoroughly and dry them with paper towels or a blow dryer.

Sharp objects:

- Place needles and syringes in a puncture-proof metal or plastic container with a lid for disposal. Never re-cap, bend or break off used needles.
- If you accidentally cut or prick yourself with a contaminated sharp object, promote bleeding by lowering the involved area if possible; then wash the area well with soap and water.
- Contact your healthcare professional for treatment assessment.

Remember: all blood and body fluids are potentially infectious. Contact your healthcare provider with questions or concerns about exposure.