

Bloodborne Pathogens

This safety talk is designed for discussion leaders to use in preparing safety meetings. Set a specific time and date for your safety meeting. Publicize your meeting so everyone involved will be sure to attend.

Review this safety talk before the meeting and become familiar with its content. Make notes about the points made in this talk that pertain to your workplace. You should be able to present the material in your own words and lead the discussion without reading it. Collect whatever materials and props you will need ahead of time. Try to use equipment in your workplace to demonstrate your points.

BEGINNING THE MEETING

Give the safety talk in your own words. Use the printed talk merely as a guide. The purpose of a safety meeting is to initiate discussion of safety problems and provide solutions to those problems. Encourage employees to discuss hazards or potential hazards they encounter on the job. Ask them to suggest ways to improve safety in their area.

Don't let the meeting turn into a gripe session about unrelated topics. As discussion leader, it's your job to make sure the topic is safety. Discussing other topics wastes time and can ruin the effectiveness of your safety meeting. At the end of the meeting, ask employees to sign a sheet on the back of this talk as a record that they attended the safety meeting. Keep this talk on file for your records.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Individuals who are infected with Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) or Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) may not show symptoms and may not know they are infectious. For this reason, all human blood and body fluids should be considered as if infectious, and all precautions should be taken to avoid contact. This simple rule is known as 'universal precautions.'

In the workplace, bloodborne pathogens (BBP) may be transmitted when blood or other infectious body fluids come in contact with mucous membranes (your eyes, nose, mouth); non-intact skin (due to cuts, abrasions, burns, rashes, paper cuts); or by handling or touching contaminated materials or surfaces. Bloodborne pathogens are also transmitted by 'injection' under the skin via a contaminated sharp object puncturing or cutting the skin causing a wound.

Hepatitis B Virus versus Human Immunodeficiency Virus:

1. Hepatitis B Virus is more persistent than HIV and is able to survive for at least one week in dried blood on environmental surfaces. However, HIV will not survive for more than a few minutes when exposed to room temperature air, and will usually die within seconds.
2. A teaspoon of infected blood may contain over one billion HBV particles, while a teaspoon of infected HIV blood contains about 15 HIV particles.
3. Hepatitis B Virus usually has mild symptoms which makes diagnosis difficult. HIV infections usually are not diagnosed for years and symptoms may not appear for many months or years.
4. Hepatitis B can be prevented with a vaccine. At the present time there is no preventive vaccine for HIV.
5. No cure is presently available for HBV or HIV.

If you administer first aid to an injured person in the workplace and there is a potential for contacting any body fluids, you should adhere to the following 'universal precaution' guidelines:

1. Wear impervious gloves when there is a chance of exposure to blood or body fluids.
2. Wear a face shield to protect your entire face, and safety goggles to provide the most complete eye protection.
3. Use resuscitation devices when performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
4. Report all BBP exposures, or potential exposures to your supervisor immediately.
5. Immediately wash your hands and affected areas with soap and warm water.
6. Flush your eyes, nose or other mucous membrane areas with water, if exposed.
7. Wash down areas which body fluids may have been contacted with the use of a mild solution of household water and bleach (10:1).

GENERAL SAFETY REVIEW

This is a time to review all safety concerns, not just today's topic. Keep your notes on this page before, during and after the safety meeting.

Are you aware of any safety hazards from any other crews? Point out any hazards other crews are creating that this crew should know about. Tell the crew what you intend to do about those hazards.

Do we have any other safety business? Discuss any past issues or problems. Report any progress of investigations and action taken.

Have there been any accidents, near misses or complaints? Discuss any accidents, near misses, and complaints that have happened since the last safety meeting. Also recognize the safety contributions made by members of the crew.

Please remember, we want to hear from you about any health and safety issues that come up. If we don't know about problems, we can't take action to fix them.

ENDING THE MEETING

- Circulate Sign-Off Form.
- Assign one or more crew member(s) to help with next safety meeting.

Refer action items for follow-up. (Use the sample Hazard Report Form in the Reference Section of this binder, or your company's own form.)

Do you have any Safety Recommendations?

Do you have any Job Specific Topics you would like us to discuss?

Have you reviewed the M.S.D.S Sheet for this safety topic? Yes____ No____
N/A____

Comments:
