

**FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM****SECTION:** Medical Services Administration**POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL****SUBJECT:** Precautions for Handling  
Blood and Body Fluids

**POLICY:** All health-care workers must use appropriate barrier precautions to prevent skin and mucous-membrane exposure when contact with blood or other body fluid of any client is anticipated.

**GUIDELINES:**

1. Gloves must be worn for touching blood and body fluids, mucous membranes, or non-intact skin of all clients, for handling items or surfaces soiled with blood or body fluids, and for performing venipuncture and other vascular access procedures.
2. Gloves must be changed after contact with each client.
3. Hands and other skin surfaces shall be washed immediately and thoroughly if contaminated by blood or other body fluids. Hands should be washed immediately after gloves are removed.
4. All health-care workers must take precautions to prevent injuries caused by needles and other sharp instruments or devices during procedures, when cleaning used instruments, during disposal of used needles, and when handling sharp instruments after procedures.
5. To prevent needle stick injuries, needles must not be recapped, purposely bent or broken by hand, removed from disposable syringes, or otherwise manipulated by hand.
6. Used disposable needles and syringes and other sharp items shall be placed in puncture-resistant containers for disposal; the puncture resistant containers should be located as close as possible to the use area.
7. Regulated infectious waste must be separated from other wastes and placed in distinctive containers which do not leak and which are impervious, puncture resistant, and tear resistant and which contain obvious markings (for example, red or orange plastic bags or the biohazard label). Bags and containers holding regulated infectious waste must be tied, closed, or sealed securely to prevent leakage. Bags must be disposed of according to agency policy. (See appendix for North Dakota Administration Code, 33-20-12 - Regulated Infectious Waste.)

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8. Health-care workers who have exudative lesions or weeping dermatitis shall refrain from all direct client care and from handling client care equipment until the condition resolves.
9. Pregnant health-care workers are not known to be at greater risk of contracting HIV infection than health-care workers who are not pregnant; however, if a health-care worker develops HIV infection during pregnancy, the infant is at risk of infection resulting from perinatal transmission. Because of this risk, pregnant health-care workers should be especially familiar with and strictly adhere to precautions to minimize the risk of HIV transmission.
10. Masks and protective eyewear or face shields should be worn by health care workers to prevent exposure of mucous membranes of the mouth, nose and eyes during procedures that are likely to generate droplets of blood or body fluids.
11. Gowns or aprons should be worn during procedures that are likely to generate splashes of blood or body fluids.

**References:**

1. CDC, Universal Precautions for Prevention of Transmission of HIV and Other Bloodborne Infections Fact Sheet (2-5-99).
2. CDC, MMWR, Perspectives in Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Update: Universal Precautions for Prevention of Transmission of Human Immunodeficiency Virus, Hepatitis B Virus, and Other Bloodborne Pathogens in Health-Care Settings - 6/24/1988, Vol. 37 (24), 377-388.

