

Protecting Your Health

General:

- Practice hand hygiene before and after each client using liquid soap and warm water or alcohol-based hand rub.
- Cover cuts on your hands and arms with a waterproof bandage.
- New, single-use, disposable gloves must be worn for each client if blood exposure is likely. Gloves must be discarded after each client. Practice hand hygiene before and after glove use.
- Refrain from eating, smoking, or drinking while providing personal services.
- Ensure the area of the client's body to be treated is clean and free from any cuts, wounds, rashes, fungus or visible skin disease.

Blood and Body Fluid Exposure

Exposure to blood and body fluids presents a risk of becoming infected with Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).

What is considered an exposure?

- A needle stick from a used needle;
- A cut from a used sharp object;
- A splash of blood or body fluid onto broken skin (an open wound or cut, dermatitis); or
- A splash of blood or body fluid into the eyes, nose or mouth.

What to do if there is an exposure:

- Wear single-use gloves prior to handling or dressing the wound.
- Wash the exposed skin surface with soap and water and cover with a sterile dressing or bandage.
- Allow needlestick injuries or other puncture wounds to bleed freely.
- After cleaning the wound, apply a skin antiseptic and cover with a clean dressing or bandage.
- If the eyes, nose or mouth has been exposed, flush the area thoroughly with water.
- The exposed person should seek medical attention as soon as possible.
- Keep accidental blood exposure records. Include first and last name, complete mailing address and phone number of the person exposed, first and last name of the Personal Service Worker involved in the incident, date of injury, site of injury, circumstances surrounding the injury, and action taken. The Personal Service Setting owner must keep records on site for a minimum of one year, and on file for a minimum of 5 years.

Immunizations:

Immunization is recommended for the following infectious diseases:

HEPATITIS B (Three shot series over a six month period)

Exposure to blood through a needlestick injury, or splashing blood into a cut, the eyes, mouth or nose can lead to infection. Hepatitis B vaccination is very effective at preventing this infection and is strongly recommended for those providing invasive procedures. Three doses of vaccine are required over a six-month period, followed by a blood test one month later to ensure the vaccine has worked.

Hepatitis B is a virus that affects your liver. Half of the people who become infected with hepatitis B do not have any symptoms and feel fine. A small number of people with hepatitis B can die from the initial infection. About 10 percent of adults develop a lifelong infection which can lead to scarring and cancer of the liver later in life. These people are called carriers.

TETANUS (A booster shot every ten years)

Vaccination against tetanus is recommended every ten years.

Tetanus or lockjaw is a serious disease that can happen if dirt with the tetanus germ gets into a cut in the skin. Even with early treatment, tetanus can kill 2 out of every 10 people who get it.

INFLUENZA (A shot every fall)

Vaccination against influenza is recommended each fall.

Influenza (commonly known as "the flu") is a serious, respiratory disease that is caused by a virus. People with influenza quickly become ill with a cough, fever, chills, sore throat, headache, muscle aches and tiredness. Influenza can cause serious complications such as pneumonia, particularly in the elderly. Influenza spreads easily from infected people to others through coughing and sneezing. It can also be picked-up through direct contact with surfaces and objects.

For more information please contact the Infectious Disease Control Team at 519-663-5317 ext. 2330 or visit www.healthunit.com

Source:

Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. (2009). *Infection prevention and control best practices for personal services settings*. Retrieved from http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/pubhealth/oph_standards/ophs/progstds/pdfs/pssp_2008.pdf

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