# A screen shot of a computer  Description automatically generatedbloodborne pathogens

Bloodborne pathogens are microorganisms that can cause diseases (sometimes fatal) such as Hepatitis B and C, as well as HIV. They are carried through a person’s body via infected blood and bodily fluids. For this reason, it is important to treat all human blood and bodily fluids as if they were infectious.

In any workplace, bloodborne pathogens can be transmitted when blood or other infectious bodily fluids come in contact with mucous membranes (eyes, nose or mouth), an open cut, sore or burn on your body or handling and/or touching contaminated materials or surfaces. Bloodborne pathogens can also be transmitted by injection via a contaminated sharp object (like a needle).

Universal precautions should be taken when administering first aid to an injured person when there is the potential for meeting bodily fluids.

*These guidelines include:*

* Wearing appropriate, disposable gloves to avoid coming into direct contact with the injured person’s bodily fluids. When removing disposable gloves, roll the first glove off hand inside out. Then, place the gloves in a biohazard container for proper disposal.
* Wearing a dust mask or other protective device on the face, if necessary.
* Flush eyes, nose or other exposed mucous membrane immediately following care.
* Immediately wash hands and any other affected area(s) with soap and warm water.
* Wash down areas where bodily fluids may have been contacted with the use of a mild household water and bleach solution.
* Report all BBP exposures or any potential exposures to a supervisor immediately.

It can be helpful (if possible) to have the injured person bandage his or her own wound. However, if the injury is serious call 911 immediately.

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