

## INFECTION CONTROL AND BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

The goal of all infection control procedures is to minimize the transmission of communicable disease and to prevent infection to insure optimal health for everyone. Communicable disease transmission includes:

- Contact transmission – this is person-to-person contact or a person coming in contact with a contaminated surface. This is the most common means of disease transmission.
- Airborne transmission – this occurs by “droplet infection” via breathing, talking, or coughing.
- Bloodborne transmission – this occurs through contact with blood or body fluids that are contaminated with blood. Generally these diseases are transmitted through damaged skin (sore or open skin), eyes, or mucus membranes. Coming in contact with these body fluids is called an exposure.

Universal precautions have been established to reduce the occurrence of communicable disease transmission. Universal precautions require that all human blood and body fluids be treated as if they are known to be infectious.

Universal precautions require:

- Thorough hand washing with soap and water.
- The use of gloves when in contact with body fluids.
- The use of personal protective equipment as determined necessary (masks, gloves, eye protection, aprons, or other protective clothing)
- Bagging contaminated laundry.
- Cleaning and disinfecting contaminated surface with detergent and warm water.
- Disposing of sharps without recapping in an approved container.
- Annual review of infection control procedures.

Each person is responsible to use universal precautions to protect themselves and the people they support against communicable diseases.