

Caring for Yourself While Caring for Others

Module 4: Tips for Reducing Exposure to Bloodborne and Other Infectious Diseases While Caring for Clients



PARTICIPANT HANDOUT

Practical Tips for Homecare Workers

STAY SAFE AT WORK

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health



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<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2015-102/default.html>

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**Module 4: Tips for Reducing Exposure
to Bloodborne and Other Infectious Diseases**
Participant Handouts

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this training, you will be able to do the following:

- Identify the key standard precaution steps.
- Outline the pathways through which homecare workers are exposed to risks from bloodborne and other infectious diseases.
- Describe strategies and tools to reduce risks.
- Follow positive problem-solving steps with clients.

Workshop at a Glance

Activity	Time
1. Welcome, Introductions, and Reviewing Standard Precautions	45 minutes
2. Distinguishing Bloodborne and Other Infectious Diseases and Exposure Risks	25 minutes
3. Tips and Tools for Reducing Risks of Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens and Infectious Diseases	35 minutes
4. Talking with Clients to Uphold Healthy and Safe Practices	15 minutes
Total Time	2 hours

Standard Precautions to Protect Your Health and Safety

Review Quiz

First, introduce yourself to your partner, and learn about his or her experience in home health. Then discuss the following questions together to give the best answers and explore why the answers you have chosen are the correct ones.

1. “Standard precautions” are infection control practices that are designed to protect homecare workers from: (Check all correct answers.)

- a. Contact with clients’ blood and body fluids.
- b. Exposure to airborne infections.
- c. Contact with potentially infected surfaces.
- d. Becoming infected with diseases clients or others in homes may have.

2. The key steps for standard precautions include: (Check all correct answers.)

- a. Using gloves.
- b. Wearing an apron, mask, and eye protectors as trained.
- c. Frequent hand washing.
- d. Using disinfecting air cleaners.
- e. Proper handling and disposal of possibly infected linens and wastes.
- f. Proper handling and disposal of sharps (such as needles or diabetes sticks).

3. Which is the single most important infection control activity?

- a. Hand washing.
- b. Using gloves.

4. When should homecare workers wash their hands?

5. When should homecare workers use gloves?

Key Steps of Standard Precautions

You can't tell if people have infectious diseases just by looking at them. Using "Standard Precautions" means protecting yourself as if all blood, liquid, or airborne body fluids could be infected. Use these precautions whenever there is a chance of contact with blood or body fluids, including during tasks such as bathing, wound care, doing laundry, and toileting.

- **Wash your hands frequently throughout your work day!**

Follow these steps:

1. Get your hands wet and cover your hands and wrists with soap.
2. Briskly rub the front and back of your hands, fingers, and under your fingernails for at least 20 seconds. (You can sing "Happy Birthday" two times.) To clean nails, put a pool of soap in your palm and, using a circular motion, work soap under the nails of your opposite hand. Repeat. Clean between your fingers.
3. Rinse your hands thoroughly.
4. Dry your hands with a clean paper or cloth towel. Do not shake water off your hands.
5. Turn off the water with a clean towel, and—as necessary—open door with towel, also.
6. Throw the paper towel away.



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- **Remove any blood or body waste from your skin or the client's skin by washing with soap and running water.**

- **Use disposable non-latex gloves!**

1. Wash and dry your hands.
2. Make sure the gloves fit.
3. Put disposable gloves on when you are ready to do an activity that requires them.
4. Check for tears or holes. If you find any, do not use the gloves. Replace with a new pair.
5. NEVER touch your mouth or eyes while wearing used gloves.
6. After the activity, take off gloves, pulling down from inside the wrist (do not touch the outside of the gloves) so that they are inside out.
7. Throw away gloves in a proper container.
8. Wash and dry your hands.

- **Wear an apron, mask, and eye protectors as necessary.**

- **Properly handle and dispose of possibly infected linens and wastes.**

- **Properly handle and dispose of sharps (such as needles and diabetes sticks).**
See <http://www.cdc.gov/needledisposal/> for more information.

How Can Homecare Workers Be Exposed to Infection?

Bloodborne Diseases	Other Common Infectious Diseases
<p>There are many bloodborne infectious diseases, but three of the most serious are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, a disease that weakens the immune system.• Hepatitis B and C, both of which are liver diseases.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bacteria cause diseases such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Urinary tract infections.– Skin infections, such as from “staph.”– Pneumonia.– Tuberculosis.• Viruses cause diseases such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Influenza (the flu).– Colds.– Viral diarrhea.• Parasites cause diseases such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Diarrhea caused by <i>Giardia</i>.

How Might Workers Be Exposed?

- Being stuck by a needle or “sharp” that has infected blood or fluid on it (such as an injection needle, a diabetes stick, a razor, or a piece of broken glass).
- Touching your own eyes, nose, mouth, or open skin after touching or handling contaminated materials such as these:
 - Body fluids or blood.
 - Surfaces or objects (toys, doorknobs, counters).
 - Laundry.
 - Animal feces or urine.
- Breathing in droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- Eating contaminated food or water.
- Being bitten or scratched by an insect, pest, animal, spider, or tick carrying infection.

Advice for Ana—Tips for Staying Safe and Healthy

Ana is a homecare worker who has read a handout on bloodborne and infectious diseases she picked up at a health fair. Now she's afraid to do her work. She worries, "There are so many ways we can get sick! And there are so many illnesses we can be exposed to! How can I feel safe working in clients' homes?"

What advice would you give her?



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Effective Problem Solving with Your Clients

Use this worksheet to think through how you will talk about infectious diseases and upholding healthy and safe practices with your client.

Your client's name: _____

Your concern: _____

Step A: Plan the discussion. What do you hope for? What possible responses concern you?	
Step B: Be respectful. How can you make a request, not a demand?	
Step C: Use "I" statements. Describe your concern, how it affects you, and the possible impact on you and the client.	
Step D: Listen. See the issue from the client's point of view.	
Step E: Consider several solutions beyond your first choice.	
Step F: Know your bottom line.	