

Bloodborne Pathogens

MONTHLY
SAFETY
BRIEF

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Bloodborne pathogens?



Blood is an essential fluid in the human body, carrying oxygen and nutrients throughout the body. It can also transmit pathogens that cause fatal diseases. **Bloodborne pathogens are microorganisms such as viruses or bacteria that are carried in blood and can lead to diseases in people.** Hepatitis B (HBV) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) are the two diseases specifically addressed by OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Standard. HIV is the virus that causes **AIDS**. The time between infection and any symptoms of HIV can be 6 months to ten years. **AIDS is a fatal disease.** Generally, we think of the medical field as being at a high risk for contact with bloodborne pathogens, but all workplaces are at risk. To minimize the risk of exposure, all blood and bodily fluids must be considered infectious.



How can I protect myself from bloodborne pathogen exposure?



- Protect open wounds from infectious materials.
 - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must be clean and accessible.
 - Eye protection must be worn if a splash may occur.
 - Never re-use disposable gloves.
 - Wash hands thoroughly after removing gloves.
- PPE must be made available if there is a chance of exposure to blood or other potentially infectious material.