

First Aid and Bloodborne Pathogens

One day you may be called upon to administer first aid to someone, so it is important that you know about bloodborne pathogens and how you can protect yourself.

WHAT ARE BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS?

Bloodborne pathogens are microorganisms in human blood that can cause diseases. These include, but are not limited to, hepatitis B virus (HBV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). The diseases caused by these viruses can be fatal. You can be exposed to these microorganisms through unprotected contact with a person's blood, vomit, urine or other bodily fluids.

HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF?

- + If you're going to give a person first aid, make sure you're wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment such as latex gloves, a plastic visor and a pocket mask.



- + Consult your company's policy on first aid and bloodborne pathogens or talk to your safety manager about what type of personal protective gear you should wear.
- + Your employer must provide you with the proper protective equipment.
- + If you must administer artificial respiration (mouth-to-mouth) to a victim, be sure to use a pocket mask or other protective device between your mouth and the victim's mouth.
- + After administering any type of first aid, remove any contaminated equipment and dispose of it according to your company's safety policy.
- + Thoroughly wash your hands and arms with a disinfectant soap and very warm water after administering first aid.
- + If you administer first aid frequently, you should be vaccinated for hepatitis B.
- + Talk to your employer about receiving first aid and bloodborne pathogen training.