

# CHULA VISTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT



## INFORMATION ON UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS AND BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

### WHAT ARE UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS?

**Universal precautions** are techniques used in all situations where blood or body fluids are present, and are not limited to use with individuals known to be carrying a specific virus such as HIV or the virus causing hepatitis B or C. In the school setting, those precautions should include: hand washing, using gloves, careful trash disposal, and using disinfectants.

**HANDWASHING:** Classroom instruction about proper handwashing can be integrated into health instruction at all grade levels. Students should be instructed to wash their hands for 10 seconds. Scheduling time for students to wash hands before eating is suggested to encourage this practice.

Handwashing is the **single most important** technique for preventing the spread of infectious disease.

#### Handwashing must be done:

1. Before drinking or eating.
2. Before handling clean equipment or utensils.
3. After contact with any body secretions.
  - After handling soiled diapers, garments, or equipment.
  - Immediately after coming in contact with any one else's blood.
  - Before and after assisting with feeding.
  - After assisting with toileting or diapering.
4. After removing disposable gloves.

#### Technique for washing hands:

1. Handwashing facilities should include soap, running water, and paper towels.
2. Wet hands with running water.
3. Apply liquid soap and lather well.
4. Wash hands using a circular motion and friction for at least 10 seconds. Include front and back surfaces of hands, between fingers and knuckles, around nails, and entire wrist.
5. Rinse hands well under running water.
6. Dry hands well with paper towels, and discard towels.

**USING GLOVES:** Gloves are standard components of first aid supplies in school health offices, cafeterias, playgrounds, classrooms, and buses where they are readily accessible for emergencies and regular care. All staff members who may be called upon to administer first aid or care involving blood or other body fluids must have access to appropriate gloves.

#### When to use gloves:

1. Prior to handling body fluids.
2. When handling blood (including menstrual).
3. When changing soiled or wet diapers, or clothing.
4. When cleaning up areas contaminated with vomit, blood, saliva, urine, or feces.

#### Technique for using gloves:

1. Use a clean pair of gloves for each pupil contact or cleaning task.
2. Properly dispose of any contaminated materials (gauze, diapers, etc.) prior to removing gloves.
3. Remove gloves by grasping the cuff and then stripping it off by turning it inside out.
4. Dispose of gloves in plastic bags.
5. Wash hands after removing gloves.

**TRASH DISPOSAL:** Trash cans lined with plastic are required for disposal of trash containing blood or any other body fluid. Daily, the trash can liner, with trash enclosed, will be securely tied, removed, and a new liner inserted. Needles, syringes, or lancets used in the school setting are to be disposed of in medically approved and specially marked receptacles.

**USING DISINFECTANTS:** At each school site, appropriate and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved disinfectants are supplied and are to be used. The custodian or other trained personnel are to be called upon to clean contaminated areas.

**FIRST AID INVOLVING CPR:** Individuals with responsibility for administering first aid in school or on school buses should have current CPR instruction

and certification. CPR instruction is provided by local agencies such as the American Red Cross and the American Heart Association. It is recommended that all employees who have a CPR certification carry a device that prevents backflow of fluids from the mouth of a victim being given CPR. Devices are available through the District's Purchasing Department.

### BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

Certain pathogenic microorganisms can be found in the blood of infected individuals. These "bloodborne pathogens" may be transmitted from the infected individual to other individuals by blood or certain body fluids. The two most significant bloodborne pathogens are the hepatitis B virus (HBV) and the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

### WHAT IS HIV/AIDS?

AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is the advanced stage of HIV infection. HIV attacks the body's immune system, leaving it vulnerable to life-threatening opportunistic infections and cancers. The virus also may directly attack the central nervous system and cause deterioration of the brain. Persons infected with HIV frequently have no apparent symptoms. They may look healthy. *There is no known cure for AIDS. More than half of the persons in the United States with AIDS have died.*

### HOW IS HIV INFECTION SPREAD?

Everyone infected with HIV, even a person without apparent symptoms, can transmit the virus to someone else. HIV infection can be transmitted by:

- Sexual activity involving direct contact with semen, blood or vaginal secretion of someone who is infected;
- Sharing unsterilized instruments for tattooing, ear piercing, shaving, or acupuncture;
- Sharing intravenous (IV) needles and/or syringes with someone who is infected;
- Direct contact with infected blood on broken skin;
- Accidental needle sticks with needles containing infected blood;
- Receiving blood transfusion or blood products from someone who is infected (a screening test has been used since 1985 that has reduced this risk to 1 in 493,000 [San Diego Blood Bank, 1996], or;

- Being born to or breastfed by an infected mother.

### THE HIV/AIDS VIRUS CANNOT BE TRANSMITTED OR SPREAD:

- Through air or water
- By coughing or sneezing
- On surfaces such as phones, doorknobs, office equipment, tools, etc.
- By using drinking fountains, toilets, sinks, etc.
- Through social kissing.

### SYMPTOMS

A person could be infected with HIV and not even know because it might take years to damage the immune system enough for symptoms to appear. They may not know for many years that they have the infection. When symptoms do appear, they often seem like many common illnesses such as:

- Fever
- Swollen glands
- Loss of appetite
- Night sweats
- Diarrhea

*Only a blood test will identify the presence of HIV. As the HIV infected person becomes unable to fight off infections and certain illnesses, they are diagnosed with AIDS. There is no known cure for HIV or AIDS.*

### WHAT IS HEPATITIS B?

Hepatitis B is an infection of the liver caused by a virus present in blood and other body fluids of infected persons. Less than 50 percent of persons who become infected show symptoms of illness. The symptoms are like those of hepatitis A and include fatigue, mild fever, muscle or joint aches, nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, and abdominal pain. In some patients the urine turns dark and the skin become yellow. The onset of symptoms may appear from 6 weeks to 6 months after becoming infected with the virus. Death is uncommon in hepatitis B, but 5 to 10 percent of those infected become long-term virus carriers. Up to 25 percent of carriers may develop serious chronic liver disease. *There is a highly effective vaccine to prevent infection with hepatitis B.*

## HOW IS HEPATITIS B SPREAD?

An infected person can transmit hepatitis B as long as the virus remains in the blood. Transmission may occur as early as 4 weeks before any symptoms occur. A small number of people will carry the virus in their blood for years and are known as chronic carriers. Hepatitis B is transmitted by:

- Sexual activity involving direct contact with semen, blood, or vaginal secretions of someone who is infected;
- Sharing the unsterile, infected instruments used to penetrate skin such as, those used for tattooing, ear piercing, shaving, or acupuncture;
- Sharing intravenous (IV) needles and/or syringes with someone who is infected;
- Direct contact of infected blood with mucous membrane of the eye and mouth;
- Direct contact with infected blood on broken skin (e.g., cuts);
- Accidental needle sticks with needles containing infected blood;
- Sharing toothbrushes contaminated with infected blood; or
- Being born to an infected mother.

## SYMPTOMS

The symptoms of HEPATITIS B include:

- Mild fever
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Abdominal pain
- Nausea
- Muscle aches
- Joint aches
- Skin becomes yellowish (jaundice)
- Vomiting
- Urine turns dark

## WHAT IS HEPATITIS C?

Hepatitis C infection is the most common chronic bloodborne infection in the United States today. Hepatitis C is caused by a virus that is carried in the blood of infected persons. Some people can carry the virus in their blood for years. Carriers may not appear ill, yet they can infect others.

## HOW IS HEPATITIS C SPREAD?

Nobody knows all the ways you can catch hepatitis C. However, the virus is usually spread by contact with an infected person's blood, sexual routes, or by sharing needles with an infected person. You **cannot** catch hepatitis C by sneezing, coughing, hugging, or other casual contact.

## SYMPTOMS

Symptoms of hepatitis C are similar to the other forms of hepatitis. Like hepatitis B, a person can have the virus for many years and show no signs of illness. They can also pass the virus on to others.

## POLICIES AND LAWS

The law states that information regarding HIV/AIDS status requires written permission. This information may only be shared with persons specifically named.

- While adults grant their own written permission to share their HIV/AIDS status, parents or guardians of children must grant written permission to share information on students under 18.
- Sharing information about HIV/AIDS infected persons without written consent is prohibited by law, and that person may be found guilty of a misdemeanor, subject to a civil penalty, or a fine.
- The policies for students with HIV/AIDS state that students must not be excluded or placed specially or solely because of their HIV status.
- Only a student's physician may determine if school attendance is inappropriate due to the student's vulnerability to infections present at school.
- The current law does not require parents or physicians to inform school officials of the student's HIV/AIDS status. If disclosure by student or parent is made, it must be kept **confidential**, without disclosing the name of the student. Consult with your school nurse on the correct procedure.
- In the legalities of testing, it is a misdemeanor to disclose blood test results of HIV/AIDS positives, except by written authorization.
- Districts are required to provide inservice training for those employees who provide AIDS prevention instruction (California Education Code 51229.8).

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