



# Standard Precautions

## What are Standard Precautions?

Standard Precautions are used to prevent skin or mucous membrane contact with all body fluids, including blood, secretions and excretions (except sweat).

Standard Precautions replaces a combination of Universal Precautions and Body Substance Precautions.

Infections can occur when infectious body fluids come in contact with broken skin, the mucous membranes of the eyes, nose and mouth, or through sexual contact.

Standard Precautions help protect against all infectious diseases.



### The Six Steps of Standard Precautions

1. Handwashing
2. Use of appropriate barrier techniques
3. Cleaning & sanitizing
4. Proper disposal techniques
5. Not sharing personal items
6. Report exposures

#### 1. Handwashing



Handwashing is your best defense against any infection. Wash your hands before and after potential contact with body fluids and after removing gloves.

#### 2. Barrier Techniques



Gloves: Should always be worn when there is potential for contact with body fluids. Change gloves after each contact with body fluid.

CPR: Masks & resuscitation bags should be available in a facility to prevent possible body fluid exposure.

Masks, Eyewear and Protective Clothing: Generally intended for use by healthcare workers in high-risk settings, i.e. during procedures where splashing may occur.

### 3. Cleaning & Sanitizing



Wear gloves and use paper towels to clean up all body fluid spills. Dispose of paper towels appropriately (see below). Wash the area with soap and water and rinse. Disinfect affected area with one part bleach to 9 parts water solution for 10 minutes. Use paper towels to absorb the bleach and residue.

### 4. Proper Disposal Techniques

Contaminated Waste: Dispose of articles soiled with blood or body fluids in plastic bags tied at the top. If the first bag is visibly soiled or leaking, double-bag the article before discarding in the garbage.



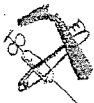
Laundry: Handle body fluid soiled laundry as little as possible. Place in leakproof bags for transport to laundry. Rinse in cold water using gloves and machine-wash in hot water using regular laundry detergent.

Sharps: Any object that could break, cut or puncture the skin can be considered a "sharp". Proper handling and disposal techniques must be used to avoid injuries from contaminated sharps.



- Do not recap, bend or break used needles.
- Sharps must be discarded in a non-breakable container with a lid.
- Sharps containers should not be overfilled and disposed of through a hazardous waste disposal company.
- Wear gloves.

### 5. Avoid Sharing Personal Items



Personal items such as razors, toothbrushes, needles, etc should not be shared ... as they may have come in contact with infectious body fluids.

### 6. Report Exposures Immediately.



Report to your employer all significant exposure to body fluids as you may need post exposure treatment.

For additional information, please contact the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Health Unit  
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