

# **Guidelines for the Management of Exposures to Blood and Body Fluids**

Appendix 6a – Patient Information Following an Exposure to Blood or Body Fluids

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Please see the following pages for Patient Information Following an Exposure to Blood or Body Fluids.

# Patient Information Following an Exposure to Blood and Body Fluids

## Should I be worried about my exposure?

- Risk of transmission from the exposure is only possible if:
  - an object with blood or a body fluid punctured or broke your skin (such as a needle stick), OR
  - the blood or body fluid came in contact with broken skin, your mouth, your genitals or your eyes (mucous membranes) AND
  - you were exposed to a fluid that can transmit the virus:

	<b>Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)</b>	<b>Hepatitis B Virus (HBV)</b>	<b>Hepatitis C Virus (HCV)</b>
<b>What fluids can transmit the virus:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blood, blood products or other body fluids visibly contaminated with blood;</li> <li>• Semen, vaginal secretions;</li> <li>• Saliva (only if contaminated with blood);</li> <li>• Breastmilk.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blood, blood products or other body fluids visibly contaminated with blood;</li> <li>• Semen, vaginal secretions;</li> <li>• Saliva;</li> <li>• Breastmilk (only if contaminated with blood).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blood, blood products or other body fluids visibly contaminated with blood;</li> <li>• Semen, vaginal secretions;</li> <li>• Saliva and breastmilk only if contaminated with blood.</li> </ul>
<b>What is the virus and how can it affect me?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It affects the immune system.</li> <li>• Over time, it wears down the immune system and makes it harder to fight infections.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It infects the liver.</li> <li>• About 90% of adults will completely recover from the infection after 6 months.</li> <li>• 5% of people will be at risk for long-term complications because of the ongoing damage to the liver (e.g. cirrhosis, or liver cancer).</li> <li>• There are treatment options available for this virus.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It infects the liver.</li> <li>• About 25% of people will clear the virus on their own</li> <li>• The other 75% of people will remain chronically infected unless they receive antiviral therapy which can clear the virus in greater than 90% of individuals.</li> <li>• Without treatment, 15-25% will be at risk for long term complications.</li> </ul>

## Communicable Disease

	<b>Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)</b>	<b>Hepatitis B Virus (HBV)</b>	<b>Hepatitis C Virus (HCV)</b>
<b>What is the risk from the exposure with a positive source?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The estimated risk of HIV transmission from a needle-stick injury is approximately 0.3%.</li> <li>Exposures to mucous membranes is approximately 0.1%.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you responded to previous vaccinations, the risk of infection is virtually 0%.</li> <li>If you have not been immunized or did not respond to vaccines, and did not receive HBIG, the risk from a needle-stick is between 1-30%.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The estimated risk of HCV transmission from a needle-stick is approximately 2%.</li> </ul>
<b>Is there a vaccine for it?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No</li> </ul>
<b>What follow-up is required?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blood tests at 3 weeks, 6 weeks, and 3 months after the exposure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blood tests at initial visit, and vaccinate as per recommendations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blood tests at 1, 3 and 6 months after the exposure.</li> </ul>
<b>What is the treatment following a high risk exposure?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are medications that help prevent infection. If you received these, refer to the information sheet.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hep B immune globulin and vaccine for those who are not immune. See Hep B Fact Sheet.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no preventive treatment.</li> <li>Monitoring for infection will allow for early treatment of infection.</li> </ul>

### **How do I protect others while I am waiting for my status to be confirmed through the testing?**

All of these viruses are transmitted through blood and body fluids so it is important to:

- Practice safer sex – use condoms for vaginal, anal and oral sex
- Do not donate blood, blood products or tissues
- Do not share personal items such as razors, toothbrushes, etc.
- Do not share needles or drug use equipment
- Ensure items contaminated with blood are disposed of in an impermeable plastic bag, closed, and disposed of with the regular garbage
- Do not get pregnant and do not breastfeed

### **What happens now?**

Public health will contact you to answer any questions you have and to remind you about the follow-up tests that are required and who you should go to for these tests to be completed. Each of these diseases are reportable in Saskatchewan. If any of your blood tests return with positive results, your family physician and public health will contact you to do any necessary follow-up.

***For more information contact:  
Your local public health office  
OR your physician or nurse practitioner  
OR HealthLine at 811.***