



# HHH Infection Control and Bloodborne Pathogens

The goal is to review principles of proper infection control techniques including bag technique, hand washing technique, review blood borne pathogens and proper use of PPE.

## Bag Technique

In accordance with HHH Compliance Policy and Procedure 410 associate will understand proper bag technique:

- Observe the principles of *Standard Precautions* at all times. The inside of the home should be regarded and maintained as a clean area.
- Transport the home health bag in a clean area of the car, preferably in a plastic or cardboard container designated for such use.
- Once in the patient's home, select the cleanest and most convenient work area and lay a clean barrier down before placing the home health bag down.
- Place the bag on the barrier.
- If you feel appropriate sanitation cannot be maintained, do not bring the bag inside the home.
- Prepare a receptacle (impermeable plastic trash bag for disposable items).
- Open the home health bag and remove items needed to wash hands (handwashing supplies should be kept at the top of the bag or in separate side pocket). Close the bag. Use the bag as few times as possible.
- Wash and dry hands according to the procedure for *Handwashing*.
- Return to the home health bag, open it again, and remove necessary items for the visit.
- Apply personal protective equipment (PPE) as needed. Keep the bag closed during the visit. If additional equipment or supplies are needed from the bag during the home visit, the handwashing procedure must be repeated.
- Discard disposable PPE in the impermeable plastic bag. To discard a disposable gown or plastic apron, remove the apron by folding the exposed side inward.
- After providing care, clean all equipment with soap and water or a home health agency-approved disinfectant before returning it to the bag. Return unused clean supplies to the bag after care is given. Contaminated equipment or equipment that cannot be cleaned in the patient's home may be transported for disinfection in an impermeable sealed plastic bag placed on the floor of the car. Never place used needles, soiled equipment, or dressings in the home health bag.
- Wash hands. Discard any remaining items according to *Standard Precautions*. Return cleaning supplies (e.g., liquid soap) to the home health bag.
- Close the home health bag and fasten. When leaving the patient's home, pick up the bag and place the barrier that was underneath it in the family trash. When traveling, store the home health bag in a clean place.

## Handwashing Technique

Definition: Hand Hygiene means cleaning your hands by using either handwashing (washing hands with soap and water), antiseptic hand wash, antiseptic hand rub (i.e. alcohol-based hand sanitizer including foam or gel), or surgical hand antisepsis. Cleaning your hands reduces:

- The spread of potentially deadly germs to patients
- The risk of healthcare provider colonization or infection caused by germs acquired from the patient

## Two Methods for Hand Hygiene: Alcohol-Based Hand Sanitizer vs. Washing with Soap and Water:

1) Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are the most effective products for reducing the number of germs on the hands of healthcare providers. Antiseptic soaps and detergents are the next most effective and non-antimicrobial soaps are the least effective. Used when hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers are the preferred method for cleaning your hands in the healthcare setting.

2) Washing with soap and water:

- When hands are visibly dirty
- After known or suspected exposure to *Clostridium difficile*
- After known or suspected exposure to patients with infectious diarrhea during *norovirus* outbreaks
- If exposure to *Bacillus anthracis* is suspected or proven
- Before eating
- After using a restroom



#### When to perform hand hygiene:

- Before eating
- Before and after having direct contact with a patient's intact skin (taking a pulse or blood pressure, performing physical examinations, lifting the patient in bed)
- After contact with blood, body fluids or excretions, mucous membranes, non-intact skin, or wound dressings
- After contact with inanimate objects (including medical equipment) in the immediate vicinity of the patient
- If hands will be moving from a contaminated-body site to a clean-body site during patient care
- After glove removal
- After using a restroom

#### When using alcohol-based hand sanitizer:

- Put product on hands and rub hands together
- Cover all surfaces until hands feel dry - this should take around 20 seconds

#### When using soap and water:

- Wet your hands first with water, apply the amount of product recommended by the manufacturer to your hands, and rub your hands together vigorously for at least 15 seconds, covering all surfaces of the hands and fingers.
- Rinse your hands with water and use disposable towels to dry. Use towel to turn off the faucet.
- Avoid using hot water, to prevent drying of skin.
- Other entities have recommended that cleaning your hands with soap and water should take around 20 seconds.
- Either time is acceptable. The focus should be on cleaning your hands at the right times.

#### When and how to wear gloves:

- Wearing gloves is not a substitute for hand hygiene. Dirty gloves can soil hands. Always clean your hands after removing gloves.
- Steps for Glove Use:
  1. Choose the right size and type of gloves for the task
  2. Put on gloves before touching a patient's non-intact skin, open wounds or mucous membranes, such as the mouth, nose, and eyes
  3. Change gloves during patient care if the hands will move from a contaminated body-site (e.g., perineal area) to a clean body-site (e.g., face)
  4. Remove gloves after contact with a patient and/or the surrounding environment (including medical equipment) using proper technique to prevent hand contamination
  5. Failure to remove gloves after caring for a patient may lead to the spread of potentially deadly germs from one patient to another
  6. Do not wear the same pair of gloves for the care of more than one patient

**For more specifics on hand hygiene visit the CDC at <https://www.cdc.gov/handhygiene/providers/index.html>**

#### Bloodborne Pathogens and Precautions

- According to OSHA bloodborne pathogens are infectious microorganisms in human blood that can cause disease in humans.
- These pathogens could include hepatitis B (HBV), hepatitis C (HCV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).
- Needle sticks and other sharps-related injuries may expose workers to bloodborne pathogens.
- Standard Precautions, formerly Universal Precautions, should be taken even if there is no known infectious disease present.
- Standard precautions include hand washing and the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs).
- These precautions are important for all workers with the possibility of being exposed to blood, body fluids or body tissue.
- PPE use could include gloves, gowns, masks, and use of protective eyewear if needed.
- Isolation precautions are used in the presence of a specific infectious disease and could include contact, droplet or airborne precautions.
- Do not eat/drink in patient home or apply cosmetics, lip balm, contact lenses, etc. in resident areas
- Follow proper infection control procedures when handling or disposing of sharps or potentially infectious items,
- Follow proper equipment cleaning, disinfecting, and sterilization techniques/ schedules.
- HealthPRO-Heritage at Home will provide therapists with PPE as needed.

**Attestation: I understand and agree that I will read and comply with the guidelines contained in HealthPRO-Heritage's safety in the workplace document as well as facility specific procedures for safety.**

