

Contact Safety

MAY 2016

Mine Safety & Training Section

By: Heidi Nicholas

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

Bloodborne pathogens, we hear the term anytime we go to a doctor's office or take a first aid class. But what are they, where are they found, where would we come into contact with one on a mine site and what do we really need to do to protect ourselves?

First – What is a Bloodborne Pathogen?

- **Bloodborne pathogens** (BBPs) are infectious microorganisms in human blood that can cause disease in humans. HIV, Hepatitis B and C, Staph and Strep infections, Gastroenteritis-salmonella, Shigella, Pneumonia, Syphilis, TB, Malaria, Measles, Chicken Pox, Herpes, Urinary tract infections, and Blood infections. **The greatest risks are from HIV and Hepatitis B and C.** (osha.gov)

Second – Where are they found?

Blood and Other Potentially Infectious Materials (OPIMs)

BBPs may be found not only in human blood, but also in other potentially infectious materials including the following body fluids:

- blood products (such as plasma or serum)
- semen
- vaginal secretions

- synovial fluid (or fluid from your joints)
- amniotic fluid (or uterine fluid)
- peritoneal fluid (or fluid that fills your body cavity)
- saliva (in dental settings, or if you have an open wound in the mouth)
- any body fluid that is visibly contaminated with blood
- potentially **any** body fluid

The following body fluids are not expected to be infectious sources of blood borne pathogens unless they are visibly contaminated with blood:

- urine
- feces
- vomit
- tears
- sweat
- saliva
- nasal secretions

http://www2.lbl.gov/ehs/biosafety/BBP_Training/html/bbp_rev_iew.shtml

BBPs are not passed by casual contact with a person infected. Handshakes, hugs, sneezing, and sharing food/ drinks do not transmit BBPs to another person. **Many people may have a BBP but have no knowledge that they carry a BBP.**

Third - Where could we run into them on a mine site?

Accidents: The **highest potential** of you coming into contact with blood and therefore potentially a BBP would be when there is an accident where someone has an open/bleeding wound(s).

Coworkers with chronic health

issues: There are several chronic (long term) diseases / medical problems that could pose a risk to coworkers coming into contact with BBP. In order to alleviate symptoms of diabetes, migraines, allergies and other illnesses, they may use injectable drugs either by using a syringe or a pen. These have needles that need to be disposed of properly. As medical diagnosis are private, you may not know that a coworker uses a self-injecting drug. Please ensure if you are a patient and use self-administered drugs - dispose of needles properly and never share!!

Fourth – How do you protect yourself?

- Avoid contact with blood and body fluids
- Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as disposable gloves, safety glasses or goggles, and breathing barriers (in CPR).
- Avoid touching your eyes, mouth and nose if you are administering first aid or helping to clean up after an accident.
- Wash your hands after any potential exposure. Especially prior to eating or drinking.
- If you do not have the proper PPE available in an emergency, improvise. Sandwich bags can be used in place of gloves. Thick work gloves can be disposed of.

- Think rationally and don't panic during an emergency.

Fifth – What if you think you have been exposed?

If you are stuck by a needle or other sharp object or get blood or other potentially infectious materials in your eyes, nose, mouth, or on broken skin, immediately flood the exposed area with water and clean any wound with soap and water or a skin disinfectant if available.

Report this immediately to your employer and seek immediate medical attention.



QUIZ

If there is any specific topics you would like to learn more about please write on line below.

1. Name four BBPs.

2. Name four body fluids that are Other Potentially Infectious Materials.

3. Name four body fluids that are not typically infected with BBPs.

Employee: _____ **Date:** _____

Mine/Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

4. Name two ways to protect yourself if you are on scene of an accident.