

INFECTION CONTROL

POLICY

The practice uses appropriate equipment and procedures for cleaning, disinfection and contamination of the practice environment.

All medical staff follow appropriate infection control procedures.

PROCEDURE

Standard blood and body fluid precautions and procedures

Standard precautions apply to all patients regardless of their diagnosis or presumed infection status, and in the handling of:

- blood (including dried blood)
- saliva
- all other body fluids, secretions and excretions(excluding sweat)
- non-intact skin
- mucous membranes

Standard precautions include:

- washing and drying hands before and after patient contact
- use of personal protective equipment
- appropriate handling and disposal of sharps and waste
- aseptic techniques including appropriate use of skin disinfections
- appropriate reprocessing of reusable instruments and equipment
- environmental controls including spills management
- appropriate provision of support services

Additional blood and body fluid precautions and procedures

Additional precautions are used for patients known or suspected to be infected or colonised with highly transmissible pathogens that can cause infection:

- by air borne transmission
- by droplet transmission
- by direct or indirect contact with dry skin or with contaminated surfaces
- by any combination of these routes.

Additional precautions are designed to minimise the length of time of exposure to other patients and staff through the use of masks or isolating the patient in a separate room or putting that patient ahead of others.

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Hand washing

- Wash hands before and after direct contact with the patient.
- Wash hands after touching blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions and contaminated items, regardless of whether gloves are worn or not.
- Wash hands immediately after gloves are removed, between patient contact and when otherwise indicated to avoid transfer of micro-organisms to other patients or environments.
- Dry hands to ensure no micro-organisms remain on the hands.
- Reuseable towels are not used in treatment room and toilets.
- Liquid soap and water hand washes are sufficient where contact is with intact mucous membranes and skin. One percent Triclosan is used for hand-washing in the treatment room and consultation rooms.
- Encourage all staff to do the education module about Hand Hygiene Australia www.hha.org.au

Gloves

- Wear gloves (clean not sterile gloves are adequate) when touching blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions and contaminated items, put on clean gloves just before touching mucous membrane and non-intact skin.
- Change gloves between tasks and procedures on the same patient after contact with material that may contain a high concentration of micro-organisms.
- Remove gloves promptly after use, before touching non contaminated items and environmental surfaces and before going to another patient and wash hands immediately to avoid transfer of micro-organisms to other patients or environments.

Gowns

- Wear a gown (a clean non sterile gown is adequate) to protect skin and prevent soiling of clothing during procedures and patient care activities that are likely to generate splashing or sprays of blood, body fluids, secretions, or excretions or cause soiling of clothing
- Select a gown that is appropriate for the activity and the amount of fluid likely to be encountered.

Masks, eye protection, face shields

- Wear a mask and eye protection or a face shield to protect membranes of the eyes, nose and mouth during procedures and patient-care activities that are likely to generate splashes or sprays of blood, body fluids, secretions and excretions.

See also Spills of Blood and Body Fluids

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