

Bloodborne Pathogens Key Topic for 2012

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

In 2012, the Occupation Health & Safety (OH&S) Bloodborne Pathogens (BBP) course focused on the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) required to work with bloodborne pathogens and Other Potentially Dangerous Materials (OPIM). This document covers the following topics associated with BBP and PPE.

- PPE requirements according to Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) BBP Standard
- Necessary PPE when working with BBP
- Proper cleaning and disposal
- Appropriate street clothes and shoes

As an **employee of UAB or a student working in a research area**, you are expected to wear the appropriate street clothes, shoes, and PPE according to the work you are performing.

If you are **management**, UAB expects you to enforce the use of the appropriate PPE for your staff according to regulations.

The OSHA BBP Standard & PPE

What Does OSHA Say is Required PPE When Working with BBP?

The BBP Standard states that, in areas where employees are deemed to be at risk for exposure, an employer is **required** to provide gloves, lab coats/gowns, eye/face protection, and masks at no cost to the employee.

OSHA has this to say about PPE and BBP.

"Personal protective equipment will be considered 'appropriate' only if it does not permit blood or other potentially infectious materials to pass through to or reach the employee's work clothes, street clothes, undergarments, skin, eyes, mouth, or other mucous members under normal conditions of use and for the duration of time which the protective equipment will be used."

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“Masks in combination with eye protection devices, such as goggles or glasses with solid side shields, or chin-length face shields, shall be worn whenever splashes, spray, spatter, or droplets of blood or other potentially infectious materials may be generated and eye, nose, or mouth contamination can be reasonably anticipated.”

UAB & PPE

Before you begin your work with bloodborne pathogens or OPIM, determine the PPE you will need.

What PPE Does UAB Provide?

UAB provides the following PPE at no cost to at-risk employees who are at risk of exposure.

Appropriate personal protective equipment such as, but not limited to,

- Gloves
- Gowns,
- Laboratory coats
- Face shields or masks and eye protection, and mouthpieces
- Pocket masks or other ventilation devices as necessary

What if the PPE Doesn't Fit?

Before you begin work, ensure that appropriate PPE fits correctly. Ill-fitting PPE may allow exposure to those areas not adequately covered. According to the Standard, UAB “...must provide the appropriate PPE in the appropriate sizes.”

What Services Are Provided by UAB for PPE?

Your lab coat or scrubs should **not** be a part of your home laundry. Leave your soiled or potentially contaminated clothes in the designated area near the exit.

UAB has a commercial laundry service that cleans re-usable PPE at no cost to the employee. UAB also provides for the repair or replacement of PPE as needed to maintain its effectiveness.

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Single-use, possibly contaminated, PPE does **not** go in the regular trash. Place items such as hair bonnets, masks, gowns, gloves, and booties in the appropriate container upon your exit from the work area. The medical waste system will dispose of these items.

Donning & Doffing



Lab Coats/Disposable Gowns

Always start by donning (i.e., putting on) a clean lab coat and button it to ensure that body coverage and clothing protection. A disposable gown is a suitable replacement for a lab coat if tied in the back properly.

Remove lab coats or gowns penetrated by blood or other potentially infectious materials **immediately** or as soon as feasible.

Doff (i.e., take off) the lab coat or gown **before** leaving the lab. PPE should never leave the lab area. Always place the lab coat in the designated receptacle. Possibly contaminated disposable gowns should go in the appropriate container to go into the medical waste stream.

Gloves

- Don the appropriate gloves. Most employees use Nitrile gloves but check with your Lab Supervisor/Manager if you are not sure.
- Make sure that the gloves fit properly. There should not be any exposed skin between the end of the sleeve on the lab coat or gown and the end of the glove.
- Replace disposable, single-use, gloves as soon as practical or feasible if torn, punctured, or when the gloves have lost the ability function as a barrier to BBP.
- Replacing damaged gloves is a better solution than double-gloving when working with BBP. However, you may double-glove if both sets are new out-of-the-box to provide more protection.



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Face/Eye Protection



Protect your eyes, mouth, and nose from the likelihood of exposure to BBP. If there is a chance of a splash hazard, don goggles or a full face shield.

In Case of Emergency

Handle all exposures to Bloodborne Pathogens immediately. To be safe, assume possible contamination.

- Wash the exposed area for 15 minutes – especially the eyes.
- Report the incident to your Lab Supervisor/Manager.
 - Employees submitting exposures within 48 hours receive:
 - A confidential medical exam
 - Counseling
 - Blood testing/analysis
 - A confidential reply from the attending healthcare professional within 15 days
- Complete the [On-the-Job Injury form](#). Campus employees will go to The Workplace for evaluation.

