

## Background

### What are bloodborne pathogens?

Bloodborne pathogens are microorganisms that are present in human blood that can infect and cause disease in people who are exposed. These microorganisms are transferred through contact with contaminated blood and body fluids.

Some bloodborne pathogens include:

- HIV
- Hepatitis B
- Hepatitis C
- Syphilis
- Malaria

At construction jobsites exposure to bloodborne pathogens are moderately rare. Workers usually are usually only exposed when a coworker is hurt, and bleeds.

Always assume blood to be a biohazard and treat it as such.



## Transmission

### Ways of transmission:

Bloodborne pathogens are transmitted when contaminated blood body fluids enter the body of another person. In the workplace setting transmission is most likely to occur through:

- Accidental puncture by a sharp object
- Contact between broken or damaged skin and infected body fluids
- Contact between mucus membranes and infected body fluids

Unbroken skin forms a barrier against bloodborne pathogens, however, infected fluids can still enter through:

- Open Sores
- Cuts
- Abrasions
- Acne

### Ways it is not transmitted:

- Touching an infected person
- Coughing or sneezing
- Using the same equipment, materials, toilets, water fountains or showers as an infected person

## Safety

**PPE is always your best friend** even with Bloodborne pathogens.

- Never use damaged gloves or gloves that don't belong to you
- If gloves are ever contaminated with body fluids remove them carefully and disposed of them immediately
- If there are any cuts, or sores on your hands cover them with bandaids

Mucous membranes of the eye can be provide a path for bloodborne pathogen infection.

- Always wear your safety glasses
- Wear safety goggles and/or face shields when necessary

### Housekeeping and waste disposal

Keeping the work area clean is important for minimizing the possibility for injuries, therefor minimizing the possibility for transmission.

Always disposed of broken glass with care and do not pick it up with your bare hands.