

Bloodborne Pathogens: HIV and Hepatitis B

About Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)

The human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). HIV makes people sick by attacking the immune system and keeping it from being able to fight infection. Eventually these infections take over, and the person with AIDS dies. There is no cure for AIDS. By taking a few simple precautions, you can set your mind at ease.

About Hepatitis B Virus (HBV)

Hepatitis B virus is a potent bloodborne virus that attacks the liver, causing illness and sometimes death. But HBV is one of the few serious infectious diseases that can be prevented with a safe, effective vaccine. Vaccination is recommended if you are traveling or work in a profession with high risk of exposure.

Transmission of HIV and HBV

Both HIV and Hepatitis B can only be transmitted through body fluids. These include:

- blood
- semen
- vaginal secretions
- body fluids that might be exposed as a result of injury

Protecting Yourself

To protect yourself from HIV and Hepatitis B, wear latex gloves if you will be in contact with body fluids. Use a pocket mask when giving CPR. If you come in direct contact with body fluids, wash the area with soap and warm water and go to the emergency room.

