

## RESPONSE TO PROFESSION-RELATED EXPOSURES

### Exposures to:

**Infectious/biohazardous agents used in medical facilities**, including research/teaching labs, include microorganisms, viruses, recombinant or synthetic nucleic acid molecules, biological toxins and other biohazardous materials that may be capable causing disease, adverse health effects or contamination.

Exposures to biohazardous materials include the following:

- **Needle-sticks or other percutaneous injuries from a contaminated sharp tools**
- **Splashes to mucous membranes (eyes, nose, mouth)**
- **Inhalation of aerosolized material (large spill outside of a biosafety cabinet, centrifuge tube malfunction, etc.)**
- **Contact with open wounds, scratches, cuts**

Accidents include the following:

- **Release of biological agent from its primary containment/equipment malfunction**
- **Environmental release such as a spill**

**The emergency response procedures shall be followed when a staff member has been potentially exposed to infectious agents** including bloodborne pathogens via a needle-stick, cut, or scratch, via mucous membrane contact, or via non-intact skin contact to ensure prompt and appropriate care. **Some post-exposure treatments must be started within 1-2 hours of exposure so time is critical.**

### Immediate response:

The general rule is that the exposed site must be washed immediately for 10 minutes with copious amounts of water

- Remove any contaminated clothing
- If needle-stick, cut or scratch, wash with soap and water after allowing the wound to bleed freely. Apply an appropriate skin disinfectant if applicable.
- If mucous membrane (eyes, nose, mouth) flush with water at the nearest faucet or eye wash station for at least 15 minutes.
- If skin contact (intact or non-intact) wash with soap and water. Apply an appropriate skin disinfectant if applicable.
- **REPORT THE EXPOSURE INCIDENT IMMEDIATELY TO THE CURRENT SUPERVISOR for incident risk assessment and, if needed, in order to be guided how to seek medical attention according to the procedure, NO MATTER HOW SEEMINGLY INSIGNIFICANT THE INJURY MAY SEEM.**