



Section: Medical Exposure Control Plan – Prevention Procedures
Subject: UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT
Section #: 381.01
Issue Date: March 21, 2011
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Approved By: 

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1. Universal precautions will be observed by every member of Hillsborough County Fire Rescue with occupational exposure potential to prevent contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials.
 - a. ALL human (living or dead) body fluids shall be considered infectious.
 - b. The following items are items stocked by Hillsborough County Fire Rescue supply in order to assist members in implementing effective universal precautions.
 - i. Disposable (single use) gloves
 - ii. NFPA compliant bunker gear
 - iii. Face mask with eye protection
 - iv. N-95 face mask
 - v. Goggles and glasses with solid side shields
 - vi. Disposable gowns
 - c. These items are available to all members and shall be used as appropriate for any patient contact or situation in which a potential exposure may occur.
2. Products worn by members of Hillsborough County Fire Rescue will only be considered appropriate for use in Body Substance Isolation (BSI) if they prevent the permeation of blood and other potentially infectious materials to the members clothes, undergarments, skin, eyes, mouth, or other mucous membrane areas under normal conditions of use for the duration of time that the product is worn.
 - a. Members shall use appropriate personal protective equipment whenever there is a potential for occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials.
 - i. Should a member elect to temporarily decline the use of personal protective equipment due to **rare and extraordinary circumstances** when in the member's professional judgment its use will prevent the delivery of pre-hospital emergency care, public safety services, or pose an increased hazard to themselves or a co-worker they will:
 1. Thoroughly document all circumstances of the event and submit a report up through the chain of command in order to determine whether changes can be instituted to prevent such occurrences in the future.
3. If a garment is penetrated by blood or other potentially infectious material, the garment will be removed immediately or as soon as is feasible.
 - a. Upon removal the contaminated garment(s) will be appropriately secured in a designated area and container for storage, proper cleaning / decontamination, or disposal.
 - b. When any equipment is to be decontaminated at the station, universal precautions are to be employed to prevent exposure.
4. Gloves:
 - a. Will be worn by all members when the member has the potential for hand contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials or body secretions.
 - b. Will be worn at all times when cleaning any equipment that may have become contaminated with blood or other potentially infectious materials.
 - c. The disposable (single use) gloves shall be replaced as soon as practical whenever they become contaminated, torn, punctured, or when their ability to function as a barrier is compromised.
 - d. Firefighting gloves may be sent for decontamination provided their overall integrity has not been compromised.
 - e. Hypo-allergenic gloves, latex-free gloves, or glove liners will be available for members with allergies / sensitivity to regular disposable gloves.

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5. Face mask and eye protection:
 - a. Face mask will be worn in combination with eye protection devices when performing airway maneuvers such as intubation, surgical airways, suctioning, or any other time that the potential for splashing or atomizing of blood or other potential infectious materials exist.
 - b. Face mask and eye protection shall be used during cleaning and decontamination of blood soiled or contaminated extrication equipment (i.e. long spine boards, KEDs, etc.)
6. Rubber utility boots:
 - a. Should be worn by members during the decontamination of equipment where gross contamination can reasonably be anticipated.
7. Gowns:
 - a. Gowns will be used anytime the potential exists for exposure to blood or blood products to skin or uniform.