

Section: Medical Operations General  
Subject: MEDICAL EXPOSURE CONTROL  
Section #: 300.09  
Issue Date: March 21, 2011  
Revision Date:  
Approved By:

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1. **HAND WASHING IS THE SINGLE MOST EFFECTIVE PREVENTIVE MEASURE YOU CAN TAKE!**
2. All body fluids shall be considered to be contaminated and contagious.
3. It is the responsibility of all members to be familiar with the Hillsborough County Fire Rescue Exposure Control Plan (see Policies Section 380).
4. As metal objects close to the skin can harbor germs, it is recommended that rings (including wedding bands), bracelets and earrings be removed during duty hours.
5. It is the responsibility of the Company Officer to insure all members under his/her supervision take appropriate measures to protect against communicable/infectious diseases during operations.
6. If other health care providers are on the scene when Fire Rescue members arrive, the Company Officer will question the senior health care provider about the possibility of exposure to infectious disease prior to committing Fire Rescue members to assist with patient care.
7. When acquiring medical history and determining the type of assistance needed place particular emphasis on the possibility of exposure to infectious disease.
8. Fire Rescue members shall take the standard precautions wearing disposable medical grade gloves and eye protection in all situations that require any patient handling or when there is the possibility of coming in contact with blood or body fluids.
  - a. This includes motor vehicle accidents.
9. In addition, disposable masks will be worn if there is any doubt about the patient's health problem or where blood and/or body secretions could be splashed into the firefighter's mouth.
10. When multiple patients are being treated, HCFR members shall change disposable gloves prior to moving from one patient to another.
11. Keep track of all potentially contaminated disposable items including cleaning materials used to disinfect equipment used.
  - a. Contaminated items will be secured in a department provided red bio-hazardous waste bag and kept for proper disposal.
12. When removing exposed gloves and garments, be careful not to further contaminate yourself, equipment, or others.
13. When the patient is loaded and you are released from the call, wash your hands and wrists thoroughly with an approved hand cleaning solution.
14. All members that participate in emergency medical calls will meticulously wash their hands before boarding the apparatus to return to quarters.
  - a. Use an approved disinfectant solution, copious amounts of water, and follow with an isopropyl alcohol rinse.

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15. Before leaving the emergency scene, if replacement equipment is not available from the on-scene Rescue Company, clean and disinfect all equipment used for patient care.
  - a. Medical grade gloves will be worn during this process.
  - b. This can be accomplished by using hospital-strength spray disinfectant provided by HCFR or a solution of household bleach and water at a ratio of 1:10.
  - c. Do not use alcohol to clean equipment.
16. After returning to quarters, refer to the Hillsborough County Fire Rescue Exposure Control Plan (Policy Section 380) for further instructions on cleaning of equipment, necessary forms to be completed, log entries and reports to be made.
17. Contaminated uniforms should be changed at the station to reduce the chance of cross-contamination of family members, friends, and other contacts.
  - a. If a uniform becomes contaminated with blood or body fluids, place the uniform in a red plastic contamination bag and give it to your Battalion Chief for proper decontamination and/or disposal.