01.47 Exposure of UTMB Patients and Visitors to Bloodborne Pathogens

Purpose

To provide first aid, evaluation, prophylaxis and follow up of patients and visitors who are exposed to blood and body fluids while at UTMB

Audience

All employees of UTMB Health System, including those in hospitals, clinics, and outpatient surgical center.

Policy

1. Exposure of either patients or visitors
   When a patient or visitor is inadvertently exposed to blood and or body fluids, the exposed is at risk for developing a blood borne infection. The following steps should be taken by the closest appropriate healthcare worker:
   - Provide first aid if needed
   - Wash the wound with copious amounts of water (including eyes)
   - Contact the administrator on call and complete a Patient Safety Network (PSN) report

2. Patient exposures

   The designated healthcare worker should contact Healthcare Epidemiology for directions for follow up care for the patient beyond first aid.

   The designated healthcare worker should contact the attending physician and explain the situation. Healthcare Epidemiology will direct the attending physician in ordering serologic tests that need to be run and discuss available options for prophylaxis.

   The designated healthcare worker should contact the administrator on call and alert them of the situation. The administrator will assure that an entry into PSN is completed

   The attending physician and Healthcare Epidemiology will work together to schedule follow-up appointments for future laboratory tests.

   The attending physician will contact the patient with the results of initial laboratory tests and all follow-up tests

3. Visitors Exposures

   Campus police should be called and a report filed.

   Campus police or an involved UT Health System employee should contact Healthcare Epidemiology for the direction of any follow up care for the visitor beyond first aid.

   Campus police or the involved UT Health System employee should contact the administrator on call and alert them of the situation.

   If necessary, the visitor should be sent to the Emergency Department ED and the exposure assessed per UTMB protocols.

   If the exposure is deemed significant, the attending physician in the ED will order the following baseline labs.

   a. HIV
   b. Hepatitis B surface antibody
   c. Hepatitis C antibody

   The visitor will be handed an information sheet that explains how to have his/her personal physician obtain the results of the blood tests that were drawn in the Emergency Department. The information will also offer physicians information on which laboratory tests to request for the remainder of the follow-up period.