

THE MEDICAL PRACTICE AT 48 WIMPOLE STREET

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PRACTICE PROTOCOL ON EXPOSURE TO BLOOD

1. We are at risk for occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens, including hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV), and HIV
2. Exposures occur through needles or cuts from other sharp instruments contaminated with an infected patient's blood or through contact of the eye, nose, mouth, or skin with a patient's blood. Most exposures do not result in infection
3. Safe techniques must be used when using needles
 - do not recap needles by hand
 - dispose of used needles in appropriate sharps disposal containers
 - use appropriate barriers such as gloves, eye and face protection, or gowns when contact with blood or urine

All employees will receive a course of the hepatitis B vaccine which confers immunity against HBV

IF AN EXPOSURE OCCURS

1. Wash with soap and water
2. Flush splashes to the nose, mouth, or skin with water
3. Irrigate eyes with clean water, saline, or sterile irrigants
4. Report any exposure as soon as possible to evaluate the risk of infection and to be informed of the treatments available to help prevent infection. This may involve testing both parties blood and offering appropriate post exposure treatment

TREATMENT FOR THE EXPOSURE

HBV

If previous vaccination to hepatitis B has not be administered a course is recommended for any exposure regardless of the source person's HBV status. HBIG may be recommended depending on the source person's infection status, your vaccination status and, if vaccinated, your response to the vaccine. Post exposure treatment should begin as soon as possible after exposure, preferably within 24 hours, and no later than 7 days and if you receive this it is unlikely that you will become infected.

HCV

There is no post exposure treatment that will prevent HCV infection. Because the risk of becoming infected and passing the infection on to others after an exposure to HCV is low, no precautions are recommended.

HIV

A 4-week course of a combination of three antiretroviral drugs. Differences in side effects associated with the use of these drugs may influence which drugs are selected. Treatment should be started as soon as possible, preferably within hours, after the exposure. During the follow-up period, especially the first 6-12 weeks when most infected persons are expected to show signs of infection, you should follow recommendations for preventing transmission of HIV. These include not donating blood, semen, or organs and not having sexual intercourse. If you choose to have sexual intercourse, using a condom consistently and correctly may reduce the risk of HIV transmission. In addition, women should consider not breast-feeding infants during the follow-up period to prevent the possibility of exposing their infants to HIV that may be in breast milk.

References/Further information:

- 1) http://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/hps_bbf.html
- 2) <http://www.hpa.org.uk/Topics/InfectiousDiseases/InfectionsAZ/BloodborneVirusesAndOccupationalExposure/>
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