# Standard Infection Control Precautions

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### 2.6.1 Introduction

Management of blood and body fluid spillages is one of the nine elements of standard infection control precautions.

Occupational exposure to blood, other body fluids, secretions and excretions through spillages poses a potential risk of infection, particularly to those being exposed while providing health and social care. The safe and effective management of body fluid spillages is, therefore, essential in order to prevent transmission of infection via this route.

It must always be assumed that every person encountered could be carrying potentially harmful microorganisms. The safe and effective management of blood and other body fluid spillages safeguards staff, patients and visitors, and must be applied.

This standard operating procedure (SOP) deals specifically with the management of blood and other body fluid spillage. For other spillage refer to the NHS Fife *Waste Management Policy* – W8. The principles described in this procedure should apply to all situations and settings.

### Responsibilities

*The NHS Scotland Code of Practice for the Local Management of Hygiene and Healthcare Associated Infection* (Scottish Executive, 2004) supports action to reduce the risk of healthcare associated infection (HAI) for patients, staff, visitors and wider public at local level. Success is dependent on a change in culture where infection control is truly everybody’s business with a clear focus on the importance of good hygiene, infection control practice and education.

Service Users, staff and visitors each have an individual responsibility to ensure a safe, effective and clean physical environment in healthcare facilities. All staff have a responsibility within the organisation and must support its commitment to HAI control and reduction.


### Incident reporting

Where there has been potential or actual risk of exposure to blood and/or body fluids, the NHS Fife *Incident Management Policy* – GP1 should be followed.

All adverse reactions to PPE and/or solutions used in the management of a spillage should be reported to the line manager, Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Service (OHSAS) and/or General Practitioner (GP).
2.6.2 Good practice points

The exposure to blood and other body fluids poses a risk of infection, therefore swift and effective management of spillages, regardless of the setting, is essential for the management, prevention and control of infection. The exposure to viruses such as HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C through blood or other body fluids can be the greatest potential for harm.

All staff have a responsibility to:

› ensure spillages are dealt with as soon as practicable
› ensure all equipment required to deal with a spillage, including personal protective equipment (PPE) and spillage kits where applicable, are available and taken to the point of the spillage (refer to NHS Fife Waste Management Policy – W8)
› ensure all disposable items used during a spillage are disposed of as clinical waste in accordance with the NHS Fife Waste Management Policy – W8
› ensure all cleaning equipment used, i.e. mops, must be disposable
› undertake hand decontamination before applying PPE and following the removal of PPE
› ensure safe management of solutions used, i.e. that disinfectants are being used in accordance with manufacturer’s instructions for storage, dilution, contact times and expiry dates: staff should refer to Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) information and Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for specific solutions.

Laboratories have specific spillage policies and procedures which are held within the service and should be referred to. These have more detail pertaining to the infectious agents they encounter (see specific laboratory procedures held within the laboratory service).
2.6 MANAGEMENT OF BLOOD AND OTHER BODY FLUID SPILLAGES

2.6.3 MANAGEMENT OF BLOOD AND OTHER BODY FLUID SPILLAGES

Preparation and staff protection
All staff who have the potential to be exposed to spillages of blood or other body fluids should receive training on the safe management of blood and other body fluid spillages.
All staff are required to be aware of their areas of responsibility in relation to the management of blood and body fluid spillages.
Domestic staff should report any blood and body fluid spillages to the nurse in charge to ensure the correct management is undertaken.

Equipment required
Gather all necessary equipment before managing the spillage and ensure these are placed as near to the spillage as possible to ensure safe management. (See the tables on the following pages.)
Personal protective equipment (PPE) must be donned prior to managing the spillage following a risk assessment. Care should be taken to avoid splashing during the management of a spillage.

Management of a spillage
If the spillage is large:
- Use disposable towels/paper roll to absorb and/or contain the fluid by placing the towel on top of the spillage.
- Care must be taken to avoid splashing especially as the spillage has not yet been inactivated.
- Spillage kits should be used where these are available. (Many of the items used in the management of a spillage are often contained within ‘spillage kits’. These kits may also contain 'single incident use' disposable scoops.)

Staff should also ensure the following points are adhered to:
- Never place any items used in the containment of a spillage onto any other surface. All disposable items used should be disposed of immediately in accordance with the NHS Fife Waste Management Policy – W8.
- Following the initial management of the spillage, warm water and general purpose neutral liquid detergent diluted as indicated by the manufacturer should be used to clean the area.
- Sodium hypochlorite or sodium dichlorisocyanurate with a concentration of 10,000ppm available chlorine is used for blood spillages and 1,000ppm for other body fluid spillages where appropriate as detailed in the tables on pp.6-7.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for the disinfectant to ensure the correct contact time is achieved (manufacturer's instruction for hypochlorite – two minutes contact time)
- Use an appropriate sign or use a physical barrier to warn of the spillage to enable all other persons to avoid the spillage while it is being dealt with.

The following tables contain detail of the management of spillages involving:
- blood and/or other body fluids
- vomit/faeces, sputum or urine.

Where the source of spillage is unknown the procedure for a blood and/or other body fluid spillage should be followed.
Spillage | **Blood and/or other body fluids** e.g. CSF, peritoneal (excluding urine, sputum which has no visible blood present)
---|---
**Equipment required**
(Gather the appropriate equipment to point of use) | Risk assess the situation first
- apron (disposable)
- gloves (disposable)
- eye/face protection where there is risk of splashing
- spillage kit – where available
- scoop card if glass or sharps are involved
- heavy duty gloves where glass or sharps are involved
- paper towels/roll
- clinical waste receptacle
- solution of detergent and water
- 1% hypochlorite solution (10,000 ppm)
- warning sign or physical barrier.

**Management**
Spills less than 30ml: Don an apron and gloves.
- Place paper towel on spillage.
- Apply 10,000ppm (1%) hypochlorite solution to the spillage, ensuring that it is completely covered and/or the disposable paper towels are completely saturated with the solution.
- Leave solution on for two minutes contact time.
- Wipe up excess fluid and dispose of paper towels into CW.
- Clean the area with detergent and water using disposable cloth and dry thoroughly.
- Remove PPE and dispose with cloths used into CW.
- Wash basin/bucket in hot soapy water, dry and store.
- After completing procedure carry out hand decontamination.

Spills over 30 ml: If appropriate also wear face/eye protection.

**Disposal route**
The CW receptacle should be as near to the point of the spillage as practicable.
Remove the contaminated disposable towels used to manage the spillage from the area, place the disposable paper towels immediately into a clinical waste receptacle. **Never place the contaminated disposable paper towels on any other surface.**

Please note:
- Alcohol solutions should not be used to clear blood/body fluid spillage.
- If handling a spillage which contains sharps staff should don household gloves and other appropriate PPE and use a disposable scoop or a piece of ridged cardboard. Carefully place the sharps into a sharps container and seal as per NHS Fife **Waste Management Policy – W8.**
### 2.6 Management of Blood and Other Body Fluid Spillages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spillage</th>
<th>Vomit/faeces, sputum (with no visible blood present), urine</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equipment Required</strong></td>
<td>Risk assess the situation first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Gather the appropriate equipment to point of use)</td>
<td>★ apron (disposable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>★ gloves (disposable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>★ spillage kit – if available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>★ paper towels/roll</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management</th>
<th>Spills:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>★ Don a disposable apron and gloves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>★ If a liquid, place paper towel over spillage to contain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>★ If solid matter, use a single scoop and dispose of appropriately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>★ Wipe up excess fluid and dispose of paper towels into CW.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>★ Clean the area with detergent and water using disposable cloth and follow by drying thoroughly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>★ Remove PPE and dispose with cloths used into CW.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>★ Wash basin/bucket in hot soapy water, dry and store.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>★ After completing procedure carry out hand decontamination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>If spill is known to be infected or suspected to be infected:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>★ Apply 1,000ppm (0.1%) hypochlorite solution to the area, after cleaning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disposal route</th>
<th>The CW receptacle should be as near to the point of the spillage as practicable.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinical waste (CW)</td>
<td>Remove the contaminated disposable towels used to manage the spillage from the area, place the disposable paper towels immediately into a clinical waste receptacle. Never place the contaminated disposable paper towels on any other surface.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Please note:**

- **Do not place hypochlorite solution/granules directly on to urine spills as this may produce chlorine gas fumes.** Always clear away urine spillages then wash area with hot water and detergent and dry before applying hypochlorite solution.

- **If handling a spillage which contains sharps staff should don household gloves and other appropriate PPE and use a disposable scoop or a piece of ridged cardboard.** Carefully place the sharps into a sharps container and seal as per NHS Fife Waste Management Policy – W8.

**Decontamination of soft furnishings contaminated with blood/body fluids**

If soft furnishings have been used during the delivery of care and are affected by the spillage of blood and/or body fluids, the following steps should be taken:

- **Clean excess from the soft furnishings.**
- **Contact Domestic Services to arrange cleaning.**

Following cleaning of soft furnishings, every effort must be made to air the room to allow drying in order that the furnishing will be dry before re-use.
2.6.4 **Procedure following the clearance of any spillage**

Following clearance of a spillage staff should ensure that:

- the area is decontaminated appropriately and the area is made safe, with all items that have been used to clear the spillage removed and disposed on into the clinical waste stream in accordance with NHS Fife *Waste Management Policy* – W8
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) worn in the management of the spill is removed and disposed of into a clinical waste receptacle
- hand decontamination is performed following removal of PPE
- where appropriate an incident form is completed to enable lessons to be learned
- they consider and review current practice and consider implementing other measures to prevent spillages, such as available safety medical devices.

**Management of staff grossly contaminated with blood or body fluids**

Refer to NHS Fife *Infection Control Manual* – 2.8 Occupational Exposure Management including Sharps.
2.6 MANAGEMENT OF BLOOD AND OTHER BODY FLUID SPILLAGES

2.6.5 DOCUMENTS

Related documents
NHS Sharps Policy – GP7
NHS Fife Waste Management Policy – W8
NHS Fife Incident Management Policy – GP1
OHSAS Occupational Exposure Policy (obtain from OHSAS)
NHS Fife Infection Control Manual – 2.1 Hand hygiene
NHS Fife Infection Control Manual – 2.2 Personal protective equipment
NHS Fife Infection Control Manual – 2.3 Safe disposal of waste
NHS Fife Infection Control Manual – 2.9 Control of the environment

Guidance documents
The Watt Group Report, Scottish Executive 2003
STANDARD INFECTION CONTROL PRECAUTIONS