

How should I protect my family, others and myself after an exposure?

If your exposure puts you at risk for infection, the doctor may tell you to take the following precautions:

- Do** use latex **condoms** (with a spermicide) during sexual activity.
- Do** cover any cuts or scratches.
- Do** tell your dentist at your next visit about the exposure.
- Do not** share personal items like your toothbrush or razor.
- Do not** donate blood, organs or semen.
- Do not** breast feed.

General tips to prevent exposure:

- Wash hands with soap and water often.
- Always cover open sores with a bandage.

If you find used needles or condoms:

- **Never** touch with your hands.
- Call the **City Work's Yard** at **604-270-8721**.
- If needed, use gloves or tongs to remove needles and condoms. Place them in a hard container with a lid.

For more information:

Richmond Health Department
604-233-3150

Emergency Department
The Richmond Hospital
604-244-5151

Your family doctor

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The information in this document is intended solely for the person to whom it was given by the health care team.

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Accidental Exposure to Blood and Body Fluids

Richmond Health Department

7000 Westminster Highway
Richmond BC V6X 1A2
Tel: 604-233-3150

What to do if you are exposed.

1

Immediately apply first-aid.

For Skin Exposure/Needle Poke:

- Allow your cut to bleed.
- Wash thoroughly with soap and water for three to five minutes.

For Eye, Nose, or Mouth Exposure:

- Rinse well with water.

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You must go to an Emergency Department within 2 hours of exposure.

- Explain details of what happened.
- A doctor assesses your injury.
- Blood tests and treatment are started if necessary.
- Any follow-up testing with your family doctor is done to make sure the risk of infection is gone.

It is best to assume that all blood and body fluids are infectious.

You are at risk of getting an infection when:

- You have been pricked with a used or dirty needle.
- You have an open cut or scrape that has been in contact with another person's blood or body fluids.
- You had another person's blood or saliva splashed or sprayed in your eye, nose or mouth.
- You have been bitten or scratched by another person and the skin has been broken.

Blood and body fluids may have viruses or bacteria.

These could cause the following infections:

Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B infection is preventable. You are encouraged to have a Hepatitis B vaccine if your work or lifestyle exposes you to the virus.

If you have not had Hepatitis B vaccine, you may begin your Hepatitis B vaccine series immediately following an exposure.

Hepatitis C

There is no preventive vaccine for Hepatitis C. If exposed, you will be tested on a regular basis to make sure that you have not been infected.

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)

If the doctor suspects exposure to HIV, you will be advised to start drug treatment.

It is best to start this treatment within the first 2 hours after being exposed. This drug treatment usually lasts for 28 days.

Tetanus

You may require a Tetanus vaccine if you have not received one in the last 10 years.

For more information, contact your local health department or your family doctor.

Note: This pamphlet does not address exposure from unprotected sex.