

Reducing the Risk of Contracting Bloodborne Infections
(HIV and Hepatitis B Virus) Universal Hygienic Precautions for the Athletic Setting

1. Before competing, cover any open wounds you might have to reduce the transfer of blood from one open wound to another.
2. Athletes should render first aid to themselves and cover their own wounds whenever possible. This reduces the risk of transmitting a bloodborne virus from one person to another.
3. When rendering first aid to others, wear protective gloves anytime blood or other body fluids containing visible blood, open wounds, or mucous membranes are involved. Clean gloves should be worn for each athlete or the recurrence of an injury with the same athlete in any practice has occurred following treatment.
4. If you get someone else's blood or other body fluid containing visible blood on yourself, wear protective gloves and wipe it off with a disposable towel using a solution known to inactivate bloodborne pathogens. Soap and water or antiseptic hand cleaner in conjunction with clean cloth/paper towels or antiseptic towelettes are recommended by OSHA. Cloth towels should be used only once before laundering and disposable towels/towelettes should be discarded properly. Proper disposal would be the use of a plastic lined container with a lid, labeled with biohazards waste label.
5. If blood or other body fluids containing visible blood are present during practice or competition, play should be stopped, the injured athlete removed from the activity and given proper attention, and any contaminated surface should be cleaned. A uniform saturated with blood should be changed. Any open wounds should be cleaned, the bleeding should be stopped, and the wounds should be covered before the athlete is allowed to continue participation.
6. Do not use common towels to clean surfaces contaminated with blood or other body fluids containing visible blood. The use of common towels any time during athletics is a very poor health habit. Personalize towels, cups, and water bottles with the individuals name or number.
7. When cleaning contaminated surfaces, use a solution of household bleach and water or a commercially prepared, EPA-approved solution. The household bleach solution should be mixed fresh daily and should be a dilution of nine parts water to one part bleach.
8. All blood contaminated linen such as uniforms and towels should be pre-soaked and then washed in hot, soapy water.
9. Wash all soiled uniforms, towels, and other dirty linen in warm or hot soapy water. Use a normal laundry cycle and follow the washer and detergent manufacturer's recommendations.
10. In general, use good hygienic practices. Shower each practice or competition, using a liberal amount of soap and water. Avoid sharing towels, cups, and water bottles.