Early Years Policy – Dealing with Infectious Diseases (including Child Immunisation)

Attachment 3 – Procedures for Infection Prevention and Control Relating to Blood-Borne Viruses and Body Fluids

The use of standard precaution practice (refer to Definitions within the policy) is the best way to prevent transmission of blood borne viruses and body fluids.

These procedures are based on information available from the Department of Education, the Victorian Government’s Better Health Channel and the National Health and Medical Research Council.

#### Important note on blood spills:

A person responding to an incident involving blood at the service must first cover any cuts, sores or abrasions on their own hands and arms with waterproof dressings.

### Managing exposures to blood and/or body fluids

Exposures include sharps injuries (including needlestick) and splashes into or onto mucous membranes (such as eyes, nose, mouth) or non-intact skin (cuts, sores or abrasions).

* Remove contaminated clothing (if applicable) and thoroughly wash exposed area with soap and water
* Affected mucous membranes should be flushed with large amounts of water
* Eyes should be flushed gently (no soap)
* The exposed person must report any occupational exposures immediately
* Seek medical attention for an assessment of the risk of infection and appropriate treatment

### Cleaning and removal of blood spills and body fluids

#### Equipment (label clearly and keep in an easily accessible location)

* Disposable gloves
* Disposable plastic bags/zip lock bags/biohazard container (if available)
* Detergent/bleach
* Disposable towels
* Access to warm water

#### Procedure

1. Put on disposable gloves.
2. Cover the spill with paper towels.
3. Carefully remove the paper towel and contents.
4. Place the paper towels in an appropriate disposable plastic bag/zip lock bag/biohazard container.
5. Clean the area with warm water and detergent/bleach, then rinse and dry.
6. Remove and place gloves in an appropriate disposable plastic bag/zip lock bag/biohazard container, seal and place it in a rubbish bin inaccessible to children.
7. Wash hands in warm, soapy water and dry (follow the World Health Organisation's [How to handwash](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK144035/figure/partii_ranking.f2/?report=objectonly)).

### Needle Stick Injuries

If you get pricked by a discarded needle and syringe (often referred to as ‘needle stick injury’) the following steps should be taken:

* Flush the injured area with flowing water.
* Wash the wound well with soap and warm water.
* Dry the wound and apply a waterproof dressing.
* Seek medical attention for an assessment of the risk of infection and appropriate treatment.
* If the needle and syringe cannot be retrieved, mark the area so others are not at risk and contact the Victorian Syringe Disposal Helpline on 1800 552 355 .

### Safe disposal of discarded needles and syringes

#### Equipment (label clearly and keep in an easily accessible location)

* Disposable gloves
* Long-handled tongs
* Disposable plastic bags
* ‘Sharps’ syringe disposal container, or rigid-walled, screw-top, puncture-resistant container available for free from local council

Procedure

1. Put on disposable gloves.
2. Do not try to re-cap the needle or to break the needle from the syringe.
3. Place the ‘sharps’ syringe disposal container on the ground next to the needle/syringe and open the lid.
4. Using tongs, pick the syringe up from the middle, keeping the sharp end away from you at all times.
5. Place the syringe, needle point down, in the ‘sharps’ syringe disposal container and close the lid securely on the container.
6. Repeat steps 3 to 5 to pick up all syringes and/or unattached needles.
7. If appropriate, clean the area with warm water and detergent/bleach, then rinse and dry.
8. Remove and place gloves in a disposable plastic bag, seal and place it in a rubbish bin inaccessible to children.
9. Wash hands in warm, soapy water and dry (follow the (follow the World Health Organisation's [How to handwash](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK144035/figure/partii_ranking.f2/?report=objectonly)).

Under no circumstances should children, work-experience students or volunteers be asked or encouraged to pick up needles/syringes.

If the needle/syringe is not accessible and cannot be collected, mark and supervise the area so that others are not at risk and contact the Victorian Syringe Disposal Helpline on 1800 552 355.

Advice on the handling and disposal of needles/syringes can be accessed from:

* the Victorian Syringe Disposal Helpline on 1800 552 355 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) for the location of the nearest needle exchange outlet or public disposal bin
* an Environmental Health Officer at your local council
* local general practitioners
* local hospitals.

**Note:** ‘Sharps’ syringe disposal containers and/or needles/syringes must not be put in normal waste disposal bins. To dispose of the container, take it to your local Needle and Syringe Program or council office, or contact the Victorian Syringe Disposal Helpline (1800 552 355) for further advice.