

Policies of the University of North Texas Health Science Center	Chapter 07 – Student Affairs, Education and Funding
07.109 Occupational Acquired Communicable Diseases	

Policy Statement.

Confidentiality of Information

The Health Science Center will comply with federal and state laws, regulations and policies to protect the confidentiality of medical and educational records. Agencies, students and individuals having access to such records by law or regulation will have access on a need-to-know basis but may not divulge the information to others. Health Science Center personnel with knowledge of students or other individuals infected with a communicable disease such as HIV or hepatitis may not reveal that information to others as provided by law or regulation. A goal of this policy is to provide environments conducive to the delivery of quality health-care, academic instruction and research while providing protection for personnel and individuals.

Application of Policy.

This policy applies to all UNTHSC students.

Definitions.

None

Procedures and Responsibilities.

Procedure / Duty

Responsible Party

1. **Screening of Students**

There is no need for routine screening. Students who wish to be screened for HIV, HBV, or HCV or any other communicable disease should seek medical attention. A private physician or an institutional physician may be designated for this purpose. Students who have a concern about caring for patients with a communicable disease may seek counseling.

UNTHSC
Student

2. **Management of Occupational Exposure to Blood Borne Pathogens - Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis B virus (HBV), and hepatitis C virus (HCV)**

Occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens is defined as accidental percutaneous (needle stick, laceration, or bite), per mucosal (ocular or mucous membrane of eyes or mouth), contact with an open wound, or

UNTHSC
Student and
Student
Health
Services

non-intact (e.g., chapped, abraded, weeping, dermatitic) skin contact with blood or other infectious materials that are potentially infectious for the transmission of blood borne pathogens such as hepatitis B and C and HIV.

Some of the methods for preventing exposure include:

- Use Standard Precautions when handling blood/body fluid (includes the use of gloves, gowns, eye protection)
- Use engineering controls (placing sharps into sharps containers, red bags for infectious waste, etc.)
- Use work practice controls (never recap needles, use of protective equipment, hand washing, etc.)
- Maintain knowledge of transmission of communicable diseases (annual education)
- Proper disposal of infectious wastes
- Hepatitis B vaccinations
- Keep cover on centrifuges or other equipment that may cause body fluid spills
- Perform procedures in a way that does not cause splashing or splattering of body fluids
- Do not eat, drink, or handle contact lenses in a contaminated environment

Students who experience an exposure shall receive medical follow-up by Student Health Services in the Family Medicine Department or may be followed by the facility in which the exposure occurs.

Following an exposure the student should:

- Report the incident to their supervisor immediately.
- "Bleed" the wound and clean with disinfectant (betadine, alcohol). In case of ocular or other mucous membrane exposure, flush area with copious amounts of clear water (fifteen minutes is the recommended length of time to flush).
- Request written consent from patient for source testing.
- Report to Student Health and to the Employee Health Department if you are in another facility, for testing, counseling, and follow-up.

Expediency is important and directly affects prophylactic treatment.

- Complete accident report. Include in the report: 1) date and time of incident, 2) type of exposure, 3) amount and type of body fluid exposed to, 4) severity (depth of puncture, durations of contact, etc.) and 5) was patient tested, etc.

The type and frequency of post-exposure testing and determination of post-exposure prophylaxis can be found in the UNTHSC Infection Control Manual; Management of Occupational Exposures to HIV, HBV, and HCV. Test results shall remain confidential. Records will be kept in the Student Health Clinic. Students who are negative upon initial (baseline testing) and subsequently convert to positive may then pursue claims for compensation or benefits. Testing of students shall be performed in accordance with applicable regulations and only after informed consent to test has been obtained.

For more information see Blood borne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan and Reporting Communicable Diseases in the UNTHSC Infection Control Manual

3. **Management of Occupational Exposure to Mycobacterium tuberculosis**

UNTHSC
Student

Policies and procedures for management of occupational exposure to Mycobacterium tuberculosis (TB) and management of patients with active TB can be found in the TB Exposure Control Plan in the UNTHSC Infection Control Manual. The plan applies to all departments in which exposure to pulmonary laryngeal tuberculosis may occur. It is intended to prevent the transmission of TB from infected individuals to susceptible hosts. All students and employees must adhere to this plan.

When working with a patient who has active TB or symptoms which suggest active TB, a TB respirator (N95 mask) must be worn. The respirator is provided by UNTHSC.

4. **Post-exposure follow-up**

UNTHSC
Student and
Student
Health
Services

Students who experience unprotected exposure to active TB should complete an Accident Report form and the following will be done by Student Health or may be done in the department where the student is assigned.

- Baseline skin testing

- Monitoring of the student for development of symptoms of TB
- Follow-up skin testing 12 weeks after exposure

For more information about communicable diseases education, counseling and testing, contact the Student Health Office.

5. **Post-exposure costs**

All testing and medications associated with the initial post-exposure treatment will be filed with the student's insurance carrier for payment. The out-of-pocket expenses associated with the initial post-exposure treatment will be covered by the university. The university assumes no fiscal responsibility for the treatment of students who develop an illness as a result of an exposure.

UNTHSC
Student and
Student
Health
Services

References and Cross-references.

UNTHSC Infection Control Manual

Forms and Tools.

All student related policies can be found online at
<http://www.hsc.unt.edu/policies/PoliciesList.cfm>

UNTHSC Catalog: <http://www.hsc.unt.edu/catalog/>

Approved: May 2000

Effective: May 2000

Revised: December 2007