



UCCS SAFE OPERATING PROCEDURE

6. SAFE CLEAN UP OF BLOODBORNE PATHOGEN SPILLS

(For assistance, please contact [Environmental Health & Safety](#))

Spills of biological agents or products contaminated with blood or other human body fluids create the risk of exposure to blood transmitted diseases¹. Exposure routes generally include absorption through the skin, especially if the skin is broken or irritated; inhalation; contact with mucous membranes; and accidental ingestion through hand-to-mouth contact. Use of appropriate protective equipment is particularly important in decontaminating and cleaning spills involving human pathogens to minimize the chances of exposure.

Personal Protective Equipment & Cleanup Supplies

- ✓ Durable container to store supplies
- ✓ Eye protection (goggles or face shield)
- ✓ Disposable impervious gloves (examination gloves acceptable)
- ✓ Disposable impervious protective garment or lab coat
- ✓ Disposable impervious shoe coverings (if you must step into or traverse areas where the spill occurred)
- ✓ Disposable absorbent towels
- ✓ Heavy-duty biohazard plastic bags
- ✓ Rigid, watertight container (plastic jar with screw lid preferred) for sharps disposal
- ✓ Small dustpan and hand brush
- ✓ (Optional) Commercial absorbent material intended for body fluids

Procedure

- ✓ Alert others to the spill
- ✓ If someone is available to provide assistance, have them provide surveillance so that people don't wander into the spill area
- ✓ Gather necessary supplies and don appropriate PPE
- ✓ Remove contaminated sharps (e.g., needles or broken glass) from the spill
 - Use a mechanical device such as tongs to prevent possible glove puncture
 - Place in a rigid, watertight container
- ✓ Soak up gross spill with paper towels or absorbent working outside edges toward middle
- ✓ Place exposed paper towels or absorbent in biohazard bag
- ✓ Soak more paper towels in disinfectant and place over the spill area, or create a berm with paper towels and pour disinfectant² over the spill area
- ✓ Allow disinfectant to remain in contact with spill area for at least 20 minutes

¹ Including but not limited to HIV, Hepatitis (HPV), malaria, syphilis, babesiosis, brucellosis, leptospirosis, arboviral infections, relapsing fever, Creutzfeld-Jakob disease, and viral hemorrhagic fever.

² Freshly prepared 10% household chlorine bleach solution (1 part bleach to 9 parts water; or scant 1/2 cup bleach to 1 quart of water) or commercial chlorine or iodine based disinfectant certified for HIV & HPV.



- ✓ Soak up disinfectant with clean paper towels and place in heavy plastic bag
- ✓ Remove personal protective equipment and thoroughly wash hands, arms, face and any other exposed body parts
- ✓ Notify lab manager or supervisor
- ✓ File exposure report with [Risk Management](#)

Last reviewed by Cynthia Norton on September 22, 2021