

Author

Bloodborne Pathogens

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Bloodborne pathogens (BBP) are microorganisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans. These pathogens include, but are not limited to, hepatitis B virus (HBV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

Swine pathogens are NOT defined as BBP – even those that are zoonotic (can be transmitted to humans). Pork producers are not required to comply with OSHA Bloodborne pathogens standard (also known as 1910.1030). However, pork producers should be aware of BBP because workers may be exposed to human blood or in the event of an injury.

In the workplace, tasks that may result in exposure to blood include: picking up broken glass, CPR, bandaging cuts, cleaning up blood after an injury, and contact with contaminated clothing.

Remember, exposure does not guarantee infection. The blood must be infected and there must be a way for blood to blood or mucous membrane contact through openings in the skin (e.g. cuts, blisters, or sores), through the eyes or mouth, or through skin penetration (needlesticks, broken glass, etc.).

There are simple ways to greatly reduce the risk of BBP transmission in a pork production facility. Workers should take 'Universal Precautions,' which means that all human blood or bodily fluids should be considered to be infectious.

The following practices will reduce your exposure to blood:

• Handwashing

- o Wash your hands immediately with soap and water after any exposure to blood.
- o If handwashing facilities are not available, use antiseptic hand cleanser with clean cloths or paper towels/towelettes.
- o If eye exposure occurs, flush mucous membranes with water immediately following contact with blood.

• Needles (this refers to needles contaminated with human blood)

- o Do not bend or recap contaminated needles and other contaminated sharps.
- o Immediately after use, place contaminated reusable sharps in containers that are puncture resistant, labeled, and leak-proof.

• Food and drink

- o Do not eat, drink, smoke, or apply cosmetics (e.g. lip balm) in work areas.
- o Do not keep food and drink in refrigerators, freezers, shelves, cabinets, or on countertops or where blood exposure may occur.

- **Personal protective equipment (PPE)**

- o Wear PPE if you are required to handle human blood, in the event of a worker injury
- o PPE may include gloves, masks, eye protection, and protective body clothing.
- o Place contaminated clothing or contaminated PPE in a container marked for biohazard use.

For more information on BBP, visit the OSHA website at: http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=STANDARDS&p_id=10051

You can also find information about BBP from the CDC at:
http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/wrkrProtect_bp.html