

**University of Connecticut  
Athletic Training Education Program**

Bloodborne Pathogens Policy

New policies have been developed to protect health care workers from bloodborne pathogens (BBP). The BBP of main concern to Certified Athletic Trainers (ATC) and Athletic Training Students (ATS) are HIV and Hepatitis B. ATC and ATS can be exposed in a variety of ways including: open bloody wounds, vomit, saliva from spitting, and blister serum. Therefore, it is imperative to practice preventive measures to protect the ATC, ATS, and patients.

**OSHA Regulations:**

OSHA ( Occupational Safety and health Administration) has developed federal regulations for employees whose jobs may put them at risk to BBP. Also, the NCAA has developed a ruling for sports participation if an athlete is bleeding.

OSHA requires each work place to develop and keep on hand an exposure control plan. Copies of the exposre control plan and federal regulations are kept in each athletic training room on campus and at affiliated clinical sites. The exposure control plan lists and defines training of ATC and ATS, Approved Clinical Instructor duties, documentation of exposure, personal protective equipment and any other pertinent information associated with that clinical site.

OSHA also regulates that all employees who are at risk of exposure to a BBP must be offered the Hepatitis B vaccination series. All ATS have received this vaccination series because it is a requirement here at the University of Connecticut for incoming freshman. If they change their mind, they can still receive the vaccination series.

Special containers should be available for biohazard waste only. These containers should have a labeled red biohazard bag. These containers must also have a proper red biohazard label. Biohazard materials include, but are not limited to: bloodied gauze, adhesive bandages, and nitrile gloves. Each facility should also have a red plastic container for sharp equipment. Sharps equipment includes, but is not limited to: scalpel blades, razors, uncapped syringes, and needles.

If you are exposed to a BBP, it is advised that you take proper precautions. Wear nitrile gloves when the possibility of exposure exists. This protective equipment will be provided by the clinical site. This offers some protection between you and the wound or fluid. If a glove should tear, replace it immediately. Also, change gloves if worn for more than 10 – 20 minutes. Some gloves may be slightly permeable; so two layers may be worn. After use, carefully remove the gloves and discard in a biohazard waste container or bag. Hands should also be washed thoroughly after wearing gloves and handling blood products.

The contaminated area (treatment table, counter top, floor, playing surface, etc.) should be cleaned thoroughly to help decontaminate surfaces. Some sources recommend using a 1:10 bleach/water solution, but this needs to be made regularly to be effective. The clinical sites of the University of Connecticut have purchased appropriate cleansing solutions to treat infected areas. In addition, tables and counters will be cleaned with the solution daily. When cleaning a

contaminated area, it is advisable to wear nitrile gloves, and absorb the fluids with paper towels – not terry cloth towels. Discard the paper towels in an appropriate biohazard waste container. Saturate the area with the cleansing solution, allowing the solution to soak for 10 – 20 minutes if possible. Clean up the area with another paper towel utilizing protective gloves. These should also be placed in the biohazard container for disposal. Again, wash hands thoroughly.

These are the main preventive guidelines set by OSHA. If followed, the risk of exposure to BBP is decreased.

All ATS must have appropriate BBP training prior to completing any clinical experience through the athletic training education program. Training sessions are held each year and are presented by an appropriately trained professional from the University of Connecticut Environmental Health and Safety. Records for every student to serve as proof that each student was in attendance are kept by the athletic training education program director.