

Appendix 20

Standard Operating Procedures – Spills and Contamination

1. Procedures in the event of Accidental Exposure to Potentially Infectious Agents

If you are exposed to human or animal blood or other body fluids through cuts, needlestick injury or splashes in your eyes - act immediately.

1. Immediately treat puncture wound or cut liberally with soap and water;
2. If eyes are splashed rinse eyes gently with water to minimise the risk of infection;
3. If there is a splash into the mouth spit it out and rinse thoroughly;
4. Inform the Sector Manager as soon as possible;
5. Document the date and time of exposure, how the incident occurred and the name of the source if known;
6. There are Blood or Body Fluid Exposure Kits available with the Manager, Laboratory Compliance Officer or the UOW Health and Safety Officer. These detail the procedures that should take place regarding further tests;
7. Complete the accident/incident form and forward to the HoD and H&S team.

2. Clean-Up of Spills of Potentially Infectious Material

It is important that the Sector Manager is informed as soon as possible regarding ALL spillages.

Clothing

1. Promptly remove affected article and carefully place in a plastic bag.
2. If clothes are autoclavable (e.g. lab coats) place in autoclavable bag and autoclave for 15 minutes at 121°C. Otherwise soak for at least 10 minutes in HOT water containing soap powder.
3. The clothes can then be washed in a washing machine or put through the laundry service. A normal hot wash cycle is considered sufficient to inactivate pathogens.

Benches, Floors, etc.

1. Ensure all non-essential personnel are immediately moved out of the affected area.
2. Supervisor or other trained persons should clean up all spills of a potentially hazardous nature.
3. Wearing disposable gloves, mop up excess liquid with paper towels.¹ The paper towels should then be sealed in bags which in turn are placed in an autoclave bag and autoclaved.
4. The contaminated area should then be thoroughly wetted with a disinfectant. Bleach (5% sodium hypochlorite) freshly diluted 1:3 or Virkon² have good broad-spectrum activity. Gluteraldehyde products may be used where damage to equipment or surfaces may result from exposure to bleach.

¹Calcium hypochlorite granules may be used to decontaminate a liquid spill before cleaning up.

²Virkon is marketed as having the widest proved spectrum of any available disinfectant. It is based on the oxidising activity of potassium monopersulphate. It has been shown to be effective against 71 types of bacteria, 33 types of virus and 15 fungi. It is also effective against HIV, hepatitis B virus, poliovirus and *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. It is resistant to inactivation by organic material and contains a surfactant. Solutions of Virkon should be freshly prepared.

If Virkon alone is used:

1. Cover the spillage with Virkon powder
2. Leave for at least 3 minutes
3. Mop up with paper towels which are then autoclaved
4. Wash the contaminated area with 1% Virkon

Contaminated equipment

Once again, where possible, supervisory staff should carry out these procedures.

Centrifuges

Mop up excess liquid with paper towels and dispose of by autoclaving. Spray, or wipe out the inside with 70% isopropanol or Virkon. Pour Virkon into contaminated buckets and leave for 10 minutes before washing out in hot soap and water.

Small Portable Item

Treat with 70% alcohol or Virkon and then wash in hot soapy water. Virkon can be used to wash contaminated equipment but metal items should not be soaked in it.