Management of Accidental Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens

Cut or Wound
- Let the wound bleed freely.
- Do not squeeze or rub the site.
- Wash the site using soap and water.
- Clean site with hand cleaning gel, if you do not have access to water.
- Do not use any strong solutions. This includes bleach, iodine, or alcohol based products. These can irritate the wound. It may make the injury worse.

Splash of Blood or Body Fluids onto Unbroken Skin
- Wash the area immediately with water.
- Clean the area with hand cleaning gel if you do not have access to water.
- Do not use alcohol based products.
- Do not rub the skin.

Exposure to the Eye
- Irrigate the eye immediately with a sterile eye solution. You can also use water or normal saline.
- Sit in a chair. Tilt your head back. Gently pour water or normal saline over the eye. Gently pull the eyelid up and down to make sure the eye is cleaned thoroughly.
- Leave contact lenses in place while doing this if you are wearing them. They form barrier over the eye that can help to protect it. Remove them once the eye has been cleaned. Clean them in the normal way. Then they will be safe to wear.
- Do not use soap or disinfectant on the eye.

Exposure to the Mouth
- Spit the fluid or blood out immediately.
- Rinse the mouth using water or normal saline. Then spit it out again.
- Repeat this process several times.

Exposure after Sexual Contact

HIV
- Post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) is an emergency medical response. It is given as soon as possible after possible exposure to HIV. This can reduce the risk of transmission of bloodborne pathogens.
- A risk assessment should also be done. Based on this a set of comprehensive services to prevent HIV infection should take place. Services include risk assessment and counseling, HIV testing, short-term antiretroviral (ARV) drugs, follow-up, and support.
- Counseling and risk assessment are critical. This should be done before
anything else. It is strongly recommended for both the exposed individual and the other person.

- The exposed person should not have unprotected sexual intercourse or donate blood until 6-month post-exposure tests are done. Women should avoid becoming pregnant during this period. Breastfeeding should be discussed with a service provider. It should be avoided if there are safe alternatives.

Exposure to Hepatitis C, B, and E

Hepatitis C
- PEP can also be done for hepatitis C just as it is for HIV.
- People exposed to hepatitis C virus may be screened for the hepatitis C virus RNA. This can be done right away. Then again at 4–6 weeks and 4–6 months after exposure.

Hepatitis B (HBV)
- Employers are required to offer immunization for Hepatitis B (HBV) at no charge to workers if they are likely to work where exposure to this can happen. The vaccine is a series of injections over 6 months. It can provide up to 90% immunity to HBV if given before exposure. It is 70-88% effective if given within 1 week after the exposure.
- Recommended procedures for a hepatitis B vaccine or hepatitis B immune globulin should be followed after exposure.

Hepatitis E
- People exposed to hepatitis E virus may be screened for anti-HEV antibodies or for hepatitis E virus RNA.