**UTRGV School of Medicine**

**Quick Guide for Students**

**Hazardous exposure to body fluids**

Handling of and exposure to body fluids is routine in medical practice. Hazardous exposure - a needle stick or splash or inhalation - is not routine but may nevertheless happen. If you are exposed in a potentially hazardous way, please remember to take these steps;

1. **Say something.** Report the exposure promptly to an attending or resident or Student Health Services. Especially for a needle stick blood exposure, timing is crucial. According to the CDC, evaluation and initiation of preventive treatment, if indicated, should occur within 2 hours of exposure.
2. **Get care in the nearest facility** you can access within 2 hours. If you are at one of our partner hospitals, go to the ER. If you are in an office or clinic, speak to your faculty preceptor. Comply with all policies and procedures at the clinical site, including creating an Incident Report and having yourself and the source patient tested.
3. **Follow the protocol.** If a potentially hazardous exposure occurred, then have blood drawn from you to be tested for HIV, Hep B and Hep C as well as from the source patient.
4. **Get PEP - post-exposure prophylaxis - if indicated.** This is not a judgment you should make by yourself but rather by a clinician at your site. If in doubt, or if no one is immediately available, call Student Health Service (665-2511) or Dean on Call (296-2502).
5. **Follow-up with Student Health Services.** Complete paperwork - file insurance claim to cover charges for care - arrange to receive results of tests.

*OSA and SHS*

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