



EMS Exposure Management

EMS ADMINISTRATION 402

<p>PURPOSE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">I. To help facilitate timely and effective communication between multiple agencies/providers concerning all facets of exposure management.II. To provide guidelines and procedures for EMS prehospital personnel, to reduce risk of infectious disease exposure to themselves and patients, and to evaluate and report suspected exposures of communicable diseases.<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Although the presence of disease-causing agents may or may not be known, these agents may be present in body fluids and substances. Even healthy persons may carry and be capable of transmitting disease.B. Precautions identified in this policy are intended to provide prehospital personnel with information to safely care for all patients, regardless of disease status.
<p>POLICY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">I. EXPOSURE RISK REDUCTION<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Prehospital Personnel Shall:<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Follow employer's policies/procedures for infection control to protect both patients and themselves.2. Use standard precautions in all patient contacts. Additional barrier precautions are to be used based on the potential for exposure to blood-borne and air-borne pathogens.3. Wash hands, prior to and following patient contact at a minimum, regardless of the use of gloves or other barrier precautions. Thorough hand washing with soap and water is the most effective infection control activity for prehospital personnel. Waterless hand sanitizers are an option if soap and water are not available.B. Provider Agency Shall:<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Comply with all federal, state, and local regulations regarding infectious disease precautions.2. Establish and maintain a written exposure control plan designed to eliminate or minimize employee exposure. This plan shall include a procedure to be used if an employee is possibly exposed to a communicable disease and this plan shall be made easily accessible.3. Designate an infection control officer to evaluate and respond to possible infectious disease exposure of provider agency's prehospital personnel. Duties include, but are not limited to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Must be available or designate an alternate to be available on a 24/7 basis.b. Must have a working knowledge of infection control management; including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Precautions, procedures and reporting requirements.4. Make available equipment, supplies and training necessary for prehospital personnel to reasonably protect themselves and their patients against infectious disease exposure.

- C. Receiving Facility Shall: (Receiving hospitals should have staff procedures for):
1. Assisting “possibly exposed prehospital personnel” in assessing the significance of the exposure, and the need for and provision of prophylaxis.
 2. Obtaining the appropriate testing to determine whether or not the source patient is infected with a communicable disease.
 3. Identify and designate an area for the decontamination of soiled equipment and supplies. This area shall be readily accessible to EMS personnel.

II. EXPOSURE DEFINITION

- A. A significant communicable disease exposure is defined by criteria set by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Local Public Health Department and may include:
1. Contact with patient's blood, bodily tissue, or other body fluids containing visible blood on non-intact skin (e.g. open wound; exposed skin that is chapped, abraded, affected with a rash) and/or mucous membranes (e.g., eye, mouth).
 2. Contaminated (used) needle stick injury.
 3. Unprotected mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.
 4. Face-to-face contact in areas with restricted ventilation with patients who have airborne communicable diseases (e.g. H1N1, Avian flu, tuberculosis or meningitis).
 5. If extent of exposure is in question contact Napa County Public Health Department for additional guidance.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES IN A CASE OF SUSPECTED EXPOSURE

- A. Individual that may have been exposed shall:
1. Contact his or her employer’s Infection Control Officer/Designated Officer as soon as possible to determine the extent of the exposure and if follow-up recommendations including prophylaxis if required.
 2. Refer to employer’s internal notification requirements and internal policy for direction and advice on reporting, evaluation and treatment.
 3. Complete a Napa County EMS Agency [Notification of Possible Communicable Disease Exposure Form](#).
 - a. Submit form to appropriate parties according to instructions on the form.
 4. If a confirmed exposure is identified, the exposed individual needs to register as a “Patient” with either Work Health/OccuMed or the ED.
- B. Employer of the individual who may have been exposed should:
1. Assess the potential exposure to determine if the exposure meets the definition as defined above.
 2. Ensure the individual with a suspected exposure is instructed to report immediately to emergency department or other health treatment facilities for risk assessment and determination of need for prophylactic treatment.
 3. Ensure that exposed individual has completed and submitted the Napa County EMS Agency [Notification of Possible Communicable Disease Exposure Form](#).

- a. In situations where the exposed individual does not report to the hospital that received the source patient, the form should be faxed to that receiving Hospital's Emergency Department Charge Nurse.
 - b. The exposed individual or his/her provider agency/designated officer is responsible for confirming that the faxed form was received.
 4. Follow-up with ALL employees to confirm all appropriate procedures have taken place.
- C. Receiving hospitals should take the following action for the source patient:
1. Evaluate source patient for any history, signs or symptoms of a communicable disease.
 2. Obtain consent (if applicable) to, and collect appropriate specimens (e.g. blood, sputum) from the source patient necessary to determine potential risk to the exposed person.
 3. Expedite the testing process (select the tests with rapid turnaround in mind); to the extent possible, in consideration of the exposed individual's concerns and the need for continued prophylactic care.
 4. Confirm receipt of a Napa County EMS Agency [Notification of Possible Communicable Disease Exposure Form](#) and promptly report any reportable communicable diseases found in the source patient to the Public Health Division's Communicable Disease Program in accordance with the form instruction; as well as on the CMR form as required by law.
 5. Notify ALL agencies (e.g. Fire Department/EMS personnel, law enforcement, etc.) who participated in patient care treatment to determine potential risk. Additionally, notification to exposed personnel's on-duty supervisor and/or designated officer shall be made.
- D. Receiving hospitals should take the following action for the exposed individual:
1. Actively assist exposed prehospital personnel in evaluating risk and recommending and/or providing appropriate prophylactic care when indicated.
 2. Obtain blood and necessary tests from the exposed prehospital person if necessary to determine base-line status.
 3. If a confirmed exposure is identified, the exposed individual will register as a "Patient" with either Work Health/OccuMed or the ED. It is imperative these facilities assist prehospital personnel who have had exposures by expediting treatment/testing to allow for rapid return to duty if medically appropriate.
 4. Follow-up with exposed individual(s) ASAP with test results and/or additional information.
 5. Emergency departments are expected to follow CDC guidelines when managing prehospital exposure to potentially infectious substances. Go to <http://www.cdc.gov/> for the latest information.