



Gemma C. Rinefierd, Ed.D.  
Assistant Commissioner  
Office of Student Support Services  
89 Washington Avenue, Room 318-M EB  
Phone: (518) 486-6090 Web: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ss/>

Date: April 24, 2025

To: District Superintendents of BOCES  
Superintendents of Public School Districts  
Superintendents of Public School Districts  
Administrators of Public, Charter, and Nonpublic Schools  
Director of School Health Services (Medical Director)  
School Nurses

From: Gemma C. Rinefierd, Ed.D.

Subject: Bloodborne Pathogens in Classrooms

Due to the recent outbreak of disease in New York State and globally, the NYS Education Department (NYSED) would like to remind schools that [Standard Precautions](#), are infection control measures, and should always be practiced when handling blood or body fluids or materials contaminated with such. We also remind school personnel to avoid bloodborne pathogens and bodily fluid exposure in the classroom and in science laboratories. Bloodborne pathogens may transmit diseases such as HIV and hepatitis. The National Science Teachers Association and the National Association of Biology Teachers recommend that artificial blood and fluids available from reputable suppliers be used in place of human blood and other body fluids ([National Association of Biology Teachers](#)). We have updated the resources for bloodborne pathogens to assist schools in avoiding transmission of these pathogens.

To minimize this risk to students and educators, the following steps should be followed:

- Always Use Standard Precautions when handling human blood and/or body fluids. Standard Precautions assumes that all blood and/or body fluids are potentially infectious. Hand washing with soap and water or hand sanitizing with an alcohol-based hand rub should always be performed before and after removing gloves.
- Clean and disinfect any equipment that is intended for use by multiple persons and that could be exposed to blood and/or body fluids according to manufacturer's instructions before being used by another person. If the manufacturer does not provide specific cleaning and disinfection instructions, the device must not be shared. ([CDC: Considerations for Blood Glucose Monitoring and Insulin Administration](#)).
- 
- Never share diabetes care equipment (e.g., lancets, lancet pens) between people. Assign blood glucose meters to a person unless the device is designed for use in professional settings and is cleaned and disinfected after every use. Refer to the manufacturer instructions for cleaning and disinfection.
- Always follow the school or district's Exposure Control Plan for cleaning of blood spills, disposing of sharp devices (e.g. needles, lancets), and handling items that may be contaminated with blood or body fluids as required by the [United States Department of Labor's](#)

[Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#) (OSHA) and the [New York State Department of Labor's Public Employee Safety and Health Bureau](#) (PESH).

- Use artificial blood and fluids available from reputable suppliers in place of human blood and other body fluids as recommended by the National Science Teachers Association and the National Association of Biology Teachers. In cases where such substitution is not possible, educators should discuss any lesson plan involving human blood or other bodily fluids with licensed school health professionals to be certain the lesson plan and any instruments or devices to be used during the lesson will meet current health and safety requirements. All equipment, environmental and working surfaces must be cleaned and decontaminated after contact with blood or other potentially infectious material.
- The CDC provides information on [How to Clean and Disinfect Early Care and Education Settings](#). Information on blood borne pathogens, exposure control plans, and additional resources for schools are available on the Education Department's technical assistance center's website the [New York State Center for School Health](#) under the A-Z resources webpage, B -Bloodborne Pathogens.

Additional information is available on the following websites:

- Center for Disease Control and Prevention:  
[Standard Precautions for All Patient Care](#)
  - National One & Only Campaign:  
<https://npin.cdc.gov/campaign/one-only-campaign>  
[Don't share insulin pens -poster](#)
- New York State Department of Health  
[Prevention and Control Guidelines](#)  
[New York State Department of Health Infection Control Provider List](#)

Thank you for continuing to collaborate with NYSED and for your ongoing support to keep students healthy and safe. For questions, or further information, please contact the Office of Student Support Services at [StudentSupportServices@nysed.gov](mailto:StudentSupportServices@nysed.gov) or 518.486.6090.