

Section 3.2. Managing blood and body fluid spills

Blood or body fluids need to be treated as potentially infectious substances that can transmit disease should contact occur.

Blood and body fluid spills need to be managed promptly.

Managing spills depends on the type of spill, possible microorganisms present, type of surface and the area where the spill occurs. Spills may be vomit, blood, urine or any other body substance. Blood or body substances (except sweat) need to be treated as potentially infectious materials that can transmit disease should contact occur.

All members of the practice team need to be familiar with the practice's policy and procedure for managing blood and body fluid spills.

Blood and body fluid spills need to be treated promptly to reduce the potential for contact with other patients, staff or visitors, and to reduce the damage done to surfaces.

Spills kit

Practices need to have a kit readily available to manage spills. The spills kit can consist of a suitable rigid-walled labelled container (eg bucket or plastic sealable box) containing:

- a laminated guide with a list of spill kit contents and the management procedure
- nonsterile or utility gloves
- goggles/face shield
- masks
- disposable aprons
- plastic (clinical and general) waste bags
- kitty litter, polymerising beads or other absorbent material
- paper towels
- scrapers (eg two small pieces of cardboard)
- detergent to be made up when needed or detergent wipes
- hazard sign to quarantine area.

The spills kit may be combined with an infection prevention and control kit (see *Appendix 7*).

Method for cleaning spills

Standard precautions apply including PPE appropriate to the task (eg gloves, goggles/face shield, apron – which are put on well away from the spill).

The method for cleaning spills will depend on the volume of the spill and where it occurs.

1. Wipe up and safely remove any solid matter and excess material.
2. If the spill is on a hard surface:
 - clean with detergent and water
 - dry the surface
 - consider further treatment such as disinfection if site is large or in contact with skin
 - dispose of contaminated material including PPE as per local requirements.
3. If the spill is on nonremovable soft fabric or carpet:
 - do not use liquid on the spill as this will spread the spill
 - use kitty litter, polymerising beads or other absorbent material
 - scrape up residue safely without causing material to disperse
 - damp-pat surface (do not wipe or scrub) to remove further material
 - dispose of contaminated material including PPE as per local requirements
 - clean fabric or carpet with damp cloth (detergent and water) or recommended carpet cleaning agent
 - quarantine the area until the soft fabric or carpet is dry.
4. A disinfectant may be used after cleaning.
5. Hand hygiene should be performed after management of any spill.

Products for cleaning spills

The detergent used for general cleaning is satisfactory for cleaning spills.

Where transmission-based precautions apply, a disinfectant should be chosen that has label claims against the microorganism of concern.