



**THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY**
WASHINGTON, DC

Responsible University Official: Senior Associate Dean for Health Sciences

Responsible Office: Health Sciences Dean's Office

Last Revised Date: June 15, 2020

Policy and Procedures on Health Sciences Clinical Student Occupational Exposures

Policy Statement

Health sciences clinical students may be exposed to infectious agents in the course of their clinical education through contact, inhalational, or percutaneous routes. Students are required to complete training in OSHA Standard Precautions at the start of their clinical education. Students are required to maintain active health insurance through the University Student Health Insurance Program or comparable private insurance to cover health needs related to such exposures. The attached procedure details the process through which students should seek evaluation and treatment for occupational exposures. The student shall be responsible for the cost of all medical services rendered.

Students exposed to occupational risks may sustain loss of clinical education time related to contracted illnesses. All students so affected may be required to make up required educational experiences at the direction of the program.

Who is Governed by this Policy and Procedures

Health Sciences Students, Faculty, and Staff

All students enrolled in a clinical Health Sciences program at the George Washington University (GW Health Sciences) who, as a part of their training, interact with patients and/or train in any setting (e.g. health care facility, clinical laboratory, research facility, etc.) with the potential for occupational exposure to blood or body fluids.

Procedures to Follow If You Have a Needle Stick or Blood/Body Fluid Splash Exposure

Step 1: Decontaminate:

Remove any contaminated clothing, then wash area thoroughly with soap and water; flush wounds/mucous membranes with normal saline. *Immediately notify your clinical preceptor.*

Step 2: Seek Treatment and Advice:

- A. Regardless of your clinical location, if the exposure occurs between 8 AM and 4:30 PM: Call **George Washington University Hospital Employee Health Service, Suite G1092 in the GW Hospital** (GW Hospital EHS, not Medical Faculty Associates Employee Health) at **(202) 715-4275** and identify yourself as a clinical health sciences student who has had a blood/body fluid exposure. **If Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) for high-risk HIV exposure is necessary, it is best to start within 2 hours, so do not delay.**
- B. Students completing clinical education experiences within the Washington, DC, Maryland, and Northern Virginia areas: if exposure occurs after 4:30 PM: go to the GW Hospital ED and identify yourself as a clinical health sciences student who has had a blood/body fluid exposure. The ED will order baseline labs and assess your need for any treatment **(do not ask other students or residents for advice, contact GW Hospital EHS or go to the GW Hospital ED for evaluation)**
- C. Students completing clinical education experiences outside the Washington, DC, Maryland, and Northern Virginia areas should follow the facility guidelines and protocols and seek immediate treatment at the closest appropriate healthcare facility.
- D. **EVEN IF YOU RECEIVE CARE IN THE GW HOSPITAL ED, CONTACT GW HOSPITAL EHS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO THAT THEY CAN FOLLOW UP THE SOURCE PATIENT LABS AND MONITOR ANY PEP THAT MIGHT BE NECESSARY.**
- E. All occupational exposures or other injuries are to be reported to the George Washington University. Refer to your program handbook for program-specific instructions.

Step 4: Billing:

- A. Carry your health insurance card at all times.
 - a. **Your insurance will be billed for services in the GW HOSPITAL ED or other ED outside of DMV area.**
 - b. **Students are responsible for charges incurred that are not covered by insurance.**
- B. **YOU ARE NOT AN EMPLOYEE DO NOT COMPLETE WORKERS COMPENSATION CLAIMS.**

General Guidelines and Procedures Related to COVID-19 for Health Sciences Clinical Students

- A. Follow COVID preparedness guidance provided by your program and as outlined in the Clinical Program Risk Acknowledgment and Personal Responsibilities document.
- B. Review any specific guidelines of the clinical site you will be rotating.

- C. Steps to take if exhibiting respiratory or viral symptoms OR have a known COVID-19 exposure.
- If at home, stay home. If on a clinical rotation, notify your clinical preceptor/instructor and program director. If you are at a clinical site, continue wearing mask and remove self from others until further directed.
 - Call Colonial Health at 202-994-5300 (or 202-994-8951 to reach the Colonial Health Clinical line) immediately to triage risk of COVID-19 infection and follow their direction.
 - Notify your program director or clinical education supervisor by email or phone to discuss guidance from Colonial Health.
 - Follow guidance from Colonial Health for instructions on testing, treatment and evaluation, and initial medical clearance. Colonial Health clearance is then submitted to the clinical site or program director for final clearance for permission for the student to return to clinical duties or the classroom environment. Colonial Health clearance must also be submitted to the office of the Senior Associate Dean for Health Sciences (hsp@gwu.edu).
 - Final clearance, and permission for the student to return to clinical duties or classroom environment must come from the clinical site or program director. This clearance must be submitted to the office of the Senior Associate Dean for Health Sciences (hsp@gwu.edu) as well.
- D. If you have medical issues that concern you about working in a clinical setting or do not feel safe while at a clinical site, please contact your program director or clinical education supervisor by email or phone.

Guidelines on Tuberculosis

- Most incidents of TB exposure occur before the patient is recognized as having TB, and therefore the patient is not in isolation.
- The key to prevention is early isolation of patients at high risk for having infectious TB.
- If you are exposed to a patient who is later determined to have active TB, you will have an immediate and follow-up PPD test done in 12 weeks.
- If you have converted to a positive PPD test, and do not have active tuberculosis, you will be considered for prophylactic therapy with INH.

Related Information

Technical Standards and Essential Functions for Admission, Continuance, and Graduation: <https://smhs.gwu.edu/sites/default/files/TECHNICAL%20STANDARDS%20and%20ESSENTIAL%20FUNCTIONS%20FINAL%20030618.pdf>

Contacts

Contact	Telephone	Email
Health Sciences Dean's Office	202-994-0384	hsp@gwu.edu

Document History

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Most recent review by MD programs: 09/18/2017

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Who Approved This Policy

Reamer Bushardt, Senior Associate Dean for Health Sciences