

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What are Bloodborne Pathogens?**

An infectious agent present in human blood, that can infect and cause disease in humans through exposure to blood, blood products, body fluids, or other potentially infectious material. These agents include, but are not limited to, hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV), and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

### **What is an exposure?**

A specific eye, mouth, other mucous membrane, non-intact skin, or parenteral (piercing of the skin) contact with blood, body fluids, or other potentially infectious material, that results from performance of an employee's duties. Saliva and vomit are not considered an infectious body fluid unless it is visually contaminated with blood.

### **Why do I have to use the Approved Medical Providers?**

Not all medical providers understand the specific treatment protocols that employers are mandated to provide to employees who are exposed. The providers on the Approved Medical Facilities list have met with County personnel and will provide the necessary treatment in accordance with medical protocol established by the Centers for Disease Control as required by Cal/OSHA.

### **Why is an exposure not a Workers' Compensation benefit?**

Workers' Compensation is for injuries and illnesses that afflict employees in the normal course of their employment. An exposure is not an illness or an injury but has the potential of causing them. Therefore, we provide pre injury or illness treatment in hopes of preventing successful transmission of HIV or Hepatitis B.

### **When does an exposure become eligible for Workers' Compensation?**

A claim can be filed anytime, however, Workers' Compensation benefits are available to exposed employees when they actually contract HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C or when other injuries related to the exposure occur. For example, you are in a fight with a member of the public, you are injured in the altercation, which requires medical treatment and you were exposed to their blood.

### **What if I already had the Hepatitis B vaccination series, do I need another?**

No, the most recent medical evidence indicates that the vaccination series will be effective for a lifetime.

### **How are the vaccinations administered?**

The vaccination for Hepatitis B consists of a series of three inoculations. After the initial inoculation you receive another at 30 days and the last in 5 months. All three must be completed.

### **Why is my position not listed?**

Only those positions that have been identified as having regular occupational exposure to blood, body fluids or other potentially infectious material are listed. If you occasionally are exposed to these fluids you are not eligible for County sponsored vaccinations but will be treated if you are exposed.

### **Will anyone follow-up?**

The Center for Employee Health will maintain your medical file when you are exposed to blood, body fluids or other potentially infectious material. A nurse care coordinator or other medical professional will contact you after your initial visit to answer any of your questions or concerns.

### **Can I get a vaccination from my own health care provider?**

Yes, however your standard co-pay or payment arrangement will apply.

[More information](#)