

OREGON TECH DENTAL HYGIENE DEPARTMENT

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS POLICY

The Oregon Tech Dental Hygiene Department recognizes that bloodborne pathogens such as human immunodeficiency (HIV), hepatitis B virus (HBV) and hepatitis C virus (HCV) present a risk to students, faculty, staff and patients.

Preventing the transmission of bloodborne pathogens, including HBV, from patients to healthcare workers and from healthcare workers to patients requires a comprehensive approach that includes administering hepatitis B vaccine to all susceptible healthcare workers at risk, viewing all blood as potentially infectious, using measures to reduce blood exposures, and having a staff committed to safe work practices. Critical elements to this approach include adherence to universal precautions, appropriate cleaning and disinfection procedures, safe injection practices, and reducing the risks for injuries.

The department's infection control procedures including disinfection and sterilization procedures are outlined in the *Oregon Tech Dental Hygiene Program Manual*. Methods for reducing risk exposure to bloodborne pathogens and post-exposure management are outlined in the *Exposure Control Plan*.

The purpose of the department's Bloodborne Pathogens Policy (BPP) and Exposure Control Plan (ECP) is to minimize the risk of transmission of bloodborne pathogens. Policies will be reviewed annually and changes recommended as appropriate. These policies are provided to faculty, staff, and students upon entry to the program and are available to others upon request. Departmental policy and specific procedures are in accordance with the Oregon Tech Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan.

STUDENTS

Standard precautions as defined by CDC, are a set of precautions designed to prevent transmission of organisms spread by:

- Blood
- All body fluids, secretions, and excretions except sweat, regardless of whether they contain blood
- Non-intact skin
- Mucous membranes

Standard precautions are similar to universal precautions and are designed to reduce the risk of infection transmission from both recognized and unrecognized sources of infection to patients and clinicians. Standard precautions apply to contact with blood, all body fluids, secretions and excretions except sweat, regardless of whether they contain blood, non-intact skin and mucous membranes.

Standard precautions involve the use of protective barriers such as gloves, gowns, aprons, masks, or protective eyewear, which can reduce the risk of exposure of the healthcare worker's skin or mucous membranes to potentially infective materials. In addition, healthcare workers must take precautions to prevent injuries caused by needles, scalpels, and other sharp instruments or devices.

Provision of Dental Hygiene Services

Because adherence to current and accepted infection control procedures provides adequate protection for patients and healthcare providers from bloodborne infectious diseases, students and faculty are expected to provide dental hygiene services to and work with persons who have a bloodborne infectious disease. Faculty or students refusing to work with any patient will be counseled as to current medical information. A continued refusal to provide dental hygiene services to, or work with persons who have a bloodborne infectious disease, could cause an employee or student to be dismissed from the program.

Bloodborne Pathogen and Infection Control Training

Training in infection control procedures begins immediately in the pre-clinical course, fall term of the sophomore year of the Dental Hygiene program. Current CDC guidelines for infection control serve as the foundation for the infection control training program. Infection control procedures are outlined in the Oregon Tech Dental Hygiene Program Manual and are reviewed annually.

Immunizations

The Oregon Tech Dental Hygiene program requires students at their own cost, upon admission, to receive a baseline tuberculosis skin test(s)¹; to obtain a varicella titer demonstrating immunity; and to begin the hepatitis B vaccine series.

Hepatitis B Vaccination

The hepatitis B vaccine series should be completed as timely as possible. A completed series and/or titer demonstrating immunity is necessary prior to treating patients.

Tuberculosis Testing

There are two kinds of tests that are used to determine if a person has been infected with TB bacteria: the tuberculin skin test and TB blood tests. Students may choose either method.

Tuberculin skin testing must be a 2-step skin test. The TB blood test is also called interferon-gamma release assay or IGRA). The two IGRAs that are approved by the U. S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are:

1. QuantiFERON®-TB Gold In-Tube test (QFT-GIT)
2. T-SPOT®, TB test (T-Spot)

Other required immunizations include:

1. tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (Td/Tdap), 1-time dose of Tdap; Td boost every 10 years
2. tetanus within the past 10 years
3. mumps, measles, rubella (MMR), 1 or 2 doses

It is also recommended that students receive the following immunizations:

1. influenza, 1 dose annually
2. meningitis, 1 or more doses

The Dental Hygiene Department requires proof of immunization and testing be submitted to an online tracking service, CastleBranch (formerly Certified Background). In addition, the Oregon Tech Integrated Student Health Services Office (OTISHS) requires proof of certain immunizations

¹ 1 Students taking the tuberculosis skin test for the first time will need to have two tests completed. Students who have tested positive for tuberculosis in the past must schedule a consultation with the department chair. Following the baseline test(s) subsequent tests will only be required if a student becomes symptomatic for disease.

and tests. You must forward the required documentation to OTISHS at their request.

*****Exceptions for immunizations will be considered for *medical exemption* only. As healthcare workers with the potential to expose or become exposed to blood borne pathogens during patient care, vaccinations are required per CDC and Oregon Health Authority guidelines**