PURPOSE:

To give the employee necessary information on the use proper use of Personal Protective Equipment or PPE. PPE is essential to providing protection from potentially hazardous materials including potentially infectious human body fluids and samples.

SCOPE:

Processing Department

RESPONSIBILITY:

All processors are responsible for reading, understanding and competently performing this procedure.

EQUIPMENT:

N/A

SUPPLIES:

- Knee length lab coat with long, cuffed sleeves
- Eye protection
- Full face protection
- Disposable gloves
- Closed toe shoes

PROCEDURE:

Personal protective equipment in appropriate sizes is readily available to employees at no cost. All PPE is assigned based on task assessment.

A. The routine use of gloves is one of the most basic safety procedures used to protect employees from hazards associated with infectious agents. Gloves must be worn when it can be reasonably anticipated the employee may have hand contact with blood, other potentially infectious materials, mucous membranes, and non-intact skin; when performing vascular access procedures, and when handling or touching contaminated surfaces.

B. Employees are required to wear disposable single use gloves when:

- Touching blood and body fluids, including routine laboratory testing and phlebotomy procedures.
- Touching all laboratory specimens and tissues
- Touching mucous membranes and non-intact skin of all patients
- Handling items contaminated with blood or body fluids, including specimen containers, laboratory instruments, counter tops, etc.
- Performing venipuncture, skin puncture, and other vascular access procedures

C. Disposable (single use) gloves should be replaced as soon as practical if contaminated, if they are torn, punctured, or their ability to function as a protective barrier is compromised in any way. Disposable gloves will not be washed or decontaminated for re-use.

D. Gloves are removed inside out, placing the first glove removed into the palm of the other glove and the second glove removed inside out over the first. The gloves can then be disposed of in the regular trash, unless they are dripping with blood or bloody body fluids and then they should be disposed of with the biohazardous waste. Disposable gloves will not be reprocessed for any reason.

E. Wash hands thoroughly and immediately if contaminated with blood or body fluids, when there is contact with any chemicals and immediately upon removal of gloves. Hands should be washed for at least 15 seconds with an approved soap, paying special attention to areas around the fingernails and in between the fingers. Dry hands completely and apply a protective lotion as part of a complete hand care routine.

F. **Knee length lab coats with long cuffed sleeves** are to be worn only in the laboratory and patient care areas and are to be closed (e.g., snapped) to protect the clothing worn underneath. Laboratory coats are worn only in the work area and are not to be worn to the cafeteria or any public area like the lobby, offices, restrooms, etc.

G. Soiled laboratory coats are removed immediately upon leaving the work area (or as soon as possible) and placed in a designated area for storage or in an appropriate laundry hamper for storage, washing, decontamination or disposal. BBPL will clean, launder, and dispose of PPE and will repair or replace PPE as needed to maintain its effectiveness, at no cost to the employee.

H. If blood or potentially infectious materials penetrate protective clothing, these items must be removed immediately (or as soon as feasible). A plastic apron may also be needed when working with certain chemicals.

I. **Full face protection** is required when working with open tubes of blood, serum, plasma, body fluids, and with acids, caustic chemicals, and those chemicals that are considered to be carcinogens. Any procedure that has the possibility of generating droplets of blood or body fluid requires full-face protection. The SDSs of several chemicals used by Molecular Pathology require full-face protection and the use of the hood.

J. **Eye protection devices,** such as goggles or glasses with solid side shields or chin length face shields, shall be required whenever splashes spray, spatter, or droplets of blood or other potentially infectious materials may be generated, and eye, nose, or mouth contamination can be reasonably anticipated. Goggles should be worn when one is operating any instrument that uses closed tube sampling, or when working with reagents and chemicals that might be irritating to the eye.

K. Prescription eyeglasses alone are not adequate eye protection. Contact lenses are not recommended to be worn in the laboratory area. If an employee wears contact lenses, goggles should be worn at all times to prevent any exposure to the eyes. Chemicals splashed in the eyes tend to get trapped under the lens and may cause damage before the eye can get adequately

washed. All employees who wear contact lenses should notify their supervisor and the safety officer of this fact.

L. Appropriate shoes should be worn by any one working in the laboratory. If your job description requires PPE, then there should be no clogs, sandals, woven shoes, or canvas shoes worn.

M. Sharps should be placed in appropriate containers .

- Take precautions to prevent injuries caused by needles, scalpels and other objects during procedures, when cleaning used instruments, during disposal of used needles, and when handling sharp instruments after procedures.
- To prevent needle stick injuries, needles must not be recapped, purposely bent or broken by hand, removed from disposable syringe or otherwise manipulated by hand.
- After use, disposable sharps and other sharp items should be placed in the puncture-resistant containers for disposal.
- Sharps containers should be located in all drawing areas of patient service centers, on all phlebotomy trays, in patient rooms and any other strategic location.
- Broken glassware that may be contaminated shall not be picked up directly with the hands. It shall be cleaned up using mechanical means (broom and dustpan) or with an adequate amount of paper towels or gauze over the broken glassware.
- Reusable sharps that are contaminated should not be stored or processed in a manner that requires the employee to reach by hand into the container.
- If the needle must be recapped, you **MUST** use the one handed technique.
- Under no circumstances should anyone use hands to push needles or sharps into a container. The sharps should fall freely into the container.
- Sharps containers should be replaced frequently and when they are no more than 3/4 full.

N. Biohazardous Waste shall be disposed of in red bags or appropriately labeled containers.

O. Special Precautions

- If additional isolation precautions are necessary, follow the physician's orders.
- Do not clean up used trays with reusable supplies or instruments with your hands, use pickups or forceps.
- Containers used to transport contaminated reusable sharps will be puncture resistant and leak proof with a biohazard symbol on it.
- Equipment, which becomes contaminated with blood or other potentially infectious materials, shall be examined prior to servicing and/or shipping and shall be decontaminated as necessary. Any portion not decontaminated shall be labeled with a biohazard label stating which portion remains contaminated.

REFERENCES: n/a
RELATED DOCUMENTS: N/A
APPENDIXES: N/A