**Universal Precautions**

There is no documented risk of contracting HIV or another blood borne pathogen from exposure to feces, urine, nasal secretions, saliva, sputum, sweat, or tears unless they contain visible blood. The caregiver should, however, observe universal precautions whenever any contact with bodily fluids may occur. Universal precautions isolate the caregiver from contact with fluids, which may contain HIV and other bloodborne pathogens. The risk of transmission can be minimized if caregivers use the following guidelines:

1. Extraordinary care must be taken to avoid accidental wounds from sharp instruments contaminated with potentially infectious material and to avoid contact of open skin lesions with that material.
2. Gloves must be worn when handling blood soiled items, bodily fluids, excretions, and secretions, as well as surfaces, materials, and objects exposed to them.
3. Hands must be washed after treating any patients with body fluids, blood, secretions, or excretion problems. Hands must be washed thoroughly and immediately if they become contaminated with blood.
4. All blood spills, bodily secretions, and excretion must be cleaned up promptly with a disinfectant solution, such as sodium hypochlorite (1:10 dilution of household bleach with tap water).
5. All disposable supplies and blood soiled refuse should be placed in a receptacle lined with a plastic waste bay, located in a specified area (nurse's office), and disposed of daily.
6. If mouth-to-mouth resuscitation is necessary, a mask with a one-way valve should be used for self-protection. The mask should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after each use.
7. Personnel performing eye care involving contact with tears must wash their hands and wear gloves for procedure.
8. The use of gloves is necessary when there are cuts, scratches, or dermatologic lesions on the employee's hands.
9. Be sure to follow thorough hand-washing procedures after removing gloves.