

Universal precautions and using ppe

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UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS AND USING PPE Prepared For: Lenore Brown

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According to About. com professional rescuers normally use personal protective equipment when administering standard practices. These particular practices are usually known as body substance isolation or universal precautions. A rescuer or a healthcare attendant works in such a way to avoid coming in contact with body fluids of patients. History reveals that the practice of Universal Precautions started in 1985. It is important to note that the precautions have since been modified. The latest approach referred to as standard precautions was adapted in place of the Universal precautions in 1996 (American Safety & Health Institute and Human Kinetics, 13). These were basically infection control guidelines developed for the purpose of protecting people against infections that can be caused by body fluids.

Anyone is entitled to these precautions as long as he or she is exposed to body fluids. Body fluids refer to blood, semen, vaginal secretions, body tissues, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid, pleural fluid, peritoneal fluid, pericardial fluid and amniotic fluid (Osha. gov). Universal precautions do not apply when a person is exposed to saliva, feces, nasal secretions, sweat, tears, urine and vomit. Apart from protective barriers, knowledge is capable of providing protection. This knowledge is in relation to potential hazards; roles and responsibilities of personal safety and proper techniques of rescuing.

When cleaning up body fluids one should always wear disposable gloves.

Absorbent paper or towels should be used when wiping body fluids. It is

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advisable to place the paper towels in a special garbage bag. The area should then be cleaned with a disinfectant. The pieces of cloth used for cleaning should be disposed in the same garbage bag which will then be secured by tying it. The rescuer is expected to wash his or her hands after proper disposal of the garbage bag. Studies reveal that communicable diseases have since proven to be the most popular hazard encountered by rescuers. It is therefore a requirement for a medical rescuer to have personal protective equipment when carrying out his or her duties.

Personal protective equipment helps to protect rescuers from infections and injuries (Osha. gov). There are various categories of PPE. There are those that protect the rescuer from chemical hazards, infections and physical injuries. It follows that lay rescuers are expected to adhere to the practice of universal precautions. It is advisable that they follow what their professional counterparts do in this perspective so as to protect themselves.

It is important that medical supplies have a waterless hand cleaner. This form of PPE is used to clean hands in the absence of soap and water (American Safety & Health Institute and Human Kinetics, 21). However, the most appropriate method of preventing the spread of diseases is by washing hands with a soap and preferably warm water. There three types of gloves that can be used by rescuers. They include vinyl, latex and nitrile. Nitrile and latex are the most common since many users have been reported to be allergic to latex.

The CPR masks are normally used to provide a vital barrier between a victim and the lay rescuer. This barrier is very important since it is necessary for the rescuer to avoid the possible close contact with the victim. Face masks are worn in the face to protect it against body fluids.

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It is advisable that the rescuer gets the correct type of eye protection (Osha. gov). It helps to protect the eyes against infection and injury. Some masks are combined with eye protection but it mainly depends on the rescuer's preference. There is a relatively wide variety of eye protection from which a rescuer can choose from.

A puncture proof container commonly known as sharps container is used to store sharp objects. This is majorly to protect workers from getting injured. A red bio-hazardous waste for contaminated waste should be provided in place of one for regular garbage (About. com).

Osha. gov asserts that a rescuer should put on a full-body gown to protect against splashing blood. A common observation is that full-body gowns are mostly used in the hospitals as opposed to outside. This is a common practice as much it does not have a good reason to support it. It is advisable that the first aid kit is equipped with a proper gown to help protect ones clothes from getting dirty.

In conclusion, Universal Precautions together with personal protective equipment must always be used. This is the only sure way to avoid injuries and infections that can be picked up due to exposure to body fluids.

Works Cited

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