

UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

These procedures, sometimes referred to as “universal precautions,” are applicable in all cases of known or suspected HIV infection. In fact, these precautions should be followed routinely in caring for **any** child.

1. For spills of semen, blood, bloody saliva, urine, feces, or vomit on surfaces such as floors, counter tops, bathtubs, etc., wear disposable gloves and clean up the bulk of the spill with paper towels or disposable rags. Then, using a solution of ten parts water to one part disinfectant (such as ordinary household bleach), disinfect the surface. Allow it to air dry. The used rags or paper towels should be placed in a leak-proof container (e.g., a plastic bag) and put in an outdoor trash container. If you have skin contact with these substances, wash the affected areas with soap under running water for at least 10 seconds.

For body fluid on bedding, clothing and other washables, see laundering procedures in #10, below.

2. Wash your hands with soap before and after changing a diaper. Gloves are not needed unless there is blood in the feces/urine and you have a rash or open cut on your hands. In those circumstances, disposable gloves should be used.
3. Disposable diapers should be placed in a leak-proof container (e.g., a plastic bag) and put in an outdoor trash container.
4. If a child bites you and draws blood, wash the area immediately with soap and water. As you would with any human bite wound, consult with your doctor.
5. While food-sharing (i.e., more than one person eating the same piece of food, such as a hot dog, ice cream cone, etc.) will not transmit HIV, good hygiene dictates that food-sharing shall not be permitted. No other mealtime restrictions are necessary. An HIV-infected child can use the community table, dishes, glasses, and eating utensils, and be served “family-style” (i.e., from a common serving dish).
6. It is not necessary to wash the dishes and utensils used by an HIV-infected child separately. Wash them with hot, sudsy water, rinse and dry thoroughly, either by hand or automatic dishwasher.
7. Baby bottles should be cleaned and sterilized as usual.
8. Do **not** allow sharing of toothbrushes or razor blades.
9. Sharing of toys will not transmit HIV. Good hygiene dictates that if a child has put a toy into his/her mouth, the toy should be washed in soap and water before another child plays with it.
10. The clothing of an HIV-infected child may be laundered with other family members’ clothing, using ordinary laundry detergent, **unless** blood, semen, urine, feces, and/or vomit have soiled it. Use of regular or non-chlorine bleach is recommended. Clothing soiled with body fluids should be washed separately, using normal procedures. Add ½ cup of regular or non-chlorine bleach to the wash cycle. Heavily soiled items (e.g., cloth diapers) may require presoaking.