



Department of Adult, Aging and Medi-Cal Services
In-Home Supportive Services
6955 Foothill Blvd., Suite 300
Oakland, CA 94605

Attention In-Home Supportive Services Recipients and Providers: Please Read This Important Information on Universal Precautions.

The Department of Adult, Aging and Medi-Cal Services, In-Home Supportive Services Program (IHSS) wants to inform and educate you on appropriate methods that you as an IHSS provider or recipient should use daily to prevent exposure to germs, viruses, bacteria, and communicable diseases such as AIDS-related conditions and hepatitis.

On the reverse side is an important publication describing Universal Precautions, which you should be using to protect yourself. As an IHSS provider you may work with IHSS recipients who have contagious diseases. It is important to protect yourself against infection. Likewise, if you have a contagious illness, it is important to protect those around you from exposure to infection.

Please read the Universal Precautions flyer on the reverse side carefully and keep it handy so you can refer to it often. Universal Precautions help protect IHSS recipients, IHSS providers, family members, friends and others from infection. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

The informational content in the enclosed flyer and this transmittal letter will be reviewed periodically and is subject to change as new health information becomes available. The information is intended to inform and educate and is NOT a replacement for medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis or treatment by a healthcare professional

Universal Precautions for IHSS Providers



Department of Adult, Aging
and Medi-Cal Services

What Are Universal Precautions?

Universal Precautions are guidelines you follow to prevent the spread of infection, including influenza and other airborne diseases. It simply means using precautions when handling blood and other body fluids of ALL persons regardless of one's knowledge of whether or not the person is infected with a specific communicable disease. Using these Universal Precautions will protect you from communicable diseases such as HIV infection or Hepatitis B & C. Being aware of Universal Precautions guidelines will protect you and result in fewer illnesses for you and the IHSS consumers you provide care for.

What Precautions Must I Take In Caring For Someone?

1. Wash your hands with soap and running water at regular times during your workday. Common infectious diseases may be contracted from dirt and waste encountered in the workplace. Promptly remove another person's blood and body wastes from your skin by washing with soap and running water. Wash your hands before and after preparing food, performing personal care and housecleaning tasks, and after physical contact with your consumer.
2. Avoid punctures with objects that contain blood of others.
3. Handle ALL fluid discharges from another person's body particularly urine, vaginal secretions, mucous, or blood, wearing protective equipment, including mask, gloves, gown and eye protection. Always wash your hands thoroughly with soap and running water when you are finished.
4. Carefully dispose of trash that contains body wastes and sharp objects. Use special containers with plastic liners for disposal of refuse that contains blood or for any body spills that may contain blood.
5. Wash soiled laundry in a washer set on HOT, and dry them in a dryer at HIGH heat.
6. For disposal of sharp objects such as razors, use containers that cannot be broken or penetrated. Do not bend, break or recap needles. Handle diabetes lancets with caution to avoid needle sticks.
7. Clean surfaces that have blood or body fluids containing blood in them with a 1:10 solution of bleach and water mixed fresh daily. Wash dishes and utensils in hot, soapy water. Rinse in very hot water and let them air dry.

Have a vaccination for protection from Hepatitis B if you are a provider.