

OSHA and CDC Guidelines Related to Human Milk Exposure

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY and HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

29 CFR part 1910.1030

Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens

AGENCY: Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Labor

ACTION: Final Rule

SUMMARY: The Occupational Safety and Health Administration hereby promulgates a standard under section 6(b) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (the Act), 29 U.S.C. 655 to eliminate or minimize occupational exposure to Hepatitis B Virus (HBV), Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and other bloodborne pathogens. Based on a review of the information in the rulemaking record, OSHA has made a determination that employees face a significant health risk as the result of occupational exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials because they may contain bloodborne pathogens, including hepatitis B virus which causes Hepatitis B, a serious liver disease, and human immunodeficiency virus, which causes Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS). The Agency further concludes that this exposure can be minimized or eliminated using a combination of engineering and work practice controls, personal protective clothing and equipment, training, medical surveillance, Hepatitis B vaccination, signs and labels, and other provisions.

DATES: This standard shall become effective on March 5, 1992.

ADDRESSES: For additional copies of this standard, contact: OSHA Office of Publications; U.S. Department of Labor, Room N3101, 200 Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20210, Telephone (202) 523-9667.

http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=FEDERAL_REGISTER&p_id=16265

12/14/1992 - Breast milk does not constitute occupational exposure as defined by standard.

Breast milk is not included in the standard's definition of "other potentially infectious materials". Therefore contact with breast milk does not constitute

occupational exposure, as defined by the standard. This determination was based on the Centers for Disease Control's findings that human breast milk has not been implicated in the transmission of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or the hepatitis B virus (HBV) to workers although it has been implicated in perinatal transmission of HIV and the hepatitis surface antigen has been found in the milk of mothers infected with HBV. For this reason, gloves should be worn by health-care workers in situations where exposures to breast milk might be frequent, for example, in milk banking.

http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadis.show_document?p_table=INTERPRETATIONS&p_id=20952

CDC Breastfeeding Home Page, Frequently Asked Questions

Are special precautions needed for handling breast milk?

CDC does not list human breast milk as a body fluid for which most healthcare personnel should use special handling precautions. Occupational exposure to human breast milk has not been shown to lead to transmission of HIV or HBV infection. However, because human breast milk has been implicated in transmitting HIV from mother to infant, gloves may be worn as a precaution by health care workers who are frequently exposed to breast milk (e.g., persons working in human milk banks).

For additional information regarding Universal Precautions as they apply to breast milk in the transmission of HIV and Hepatitis B infections, visit the following resources:

- Perspectives in Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Update: Universal Precautions for Prevention of Transmission of Human Immunodeficiency Virus, Hepatitis B Virus, and Other Bloodborne Pathogens in Health-Care Settings. [MMWR](#) June 24, 1988, 37(24):377–388.
- CDC. Recommendations for prevention of HIV transmission in health-care settings. [MMWR](#) 1987, 36 (supplement no. 2S):1–18S.

<http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/faq/index.htm>