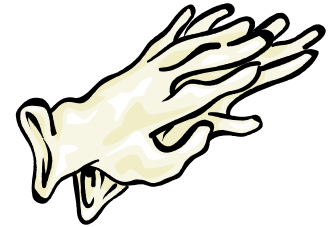


# UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS FOR CARE GIVERS

It is very important that you follow these instructions in order to protect yourself and the person to whom you are providing care.

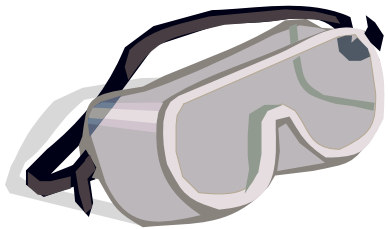
**The most important thing you can do for both you and the person is to wash your hands before you touch them, after you touch them and after you remove your gloves.** This should not be viewed as not wanting to touch them but rather as a way to prevent you from passing something to the patient, like a cold, and from you getting something from the patient.



## GLOVES

You should wear medical gloves when you will touch any mucous membrane (inside the mouth or nose), any broken skin (cuts, scratches, rashes which are oozing), blood, bowel movement, urine, wound drainage, vomit or any item that has been soiled with these substances (sheets, towels, dressings). You should also wear gloves if you have to do something to an open wound, such as when you change the dressing. When you clean up the person's area, such as making the bed or emptying the trash, gloves should be worn.

## OTHER PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT



If you have to do something that might splash blood or body fluids on you, you should wear a mask, goggles and a water proof gown or apron. Examples of when this might happen is if you have to irrigate a wound, empty a drainage or urine bag, or suction a tracheal tube in the neck. You can learn more about obtaining these items from the doctor's office, the visiting nurse or the county health department.

## NEEDLES

If needles are being used in the care, you should not try to put the cap back on the needle or try to bend the needle after it is used. Instead, just put the used needle into a puncture-resistant jar or bottle. If you are not given a container to dispose of the used needles, some people find that a glass jelly jar or peanut butter jar works well. You must use care not to poke yourself with a used needle when you put another one in the container. Whatever container is used, it must be properly disposed of as directed by the doctor or nurse. If you do stick yourself with a used need, contact the doctor as soon as possible. He/she will direct you on what to do.

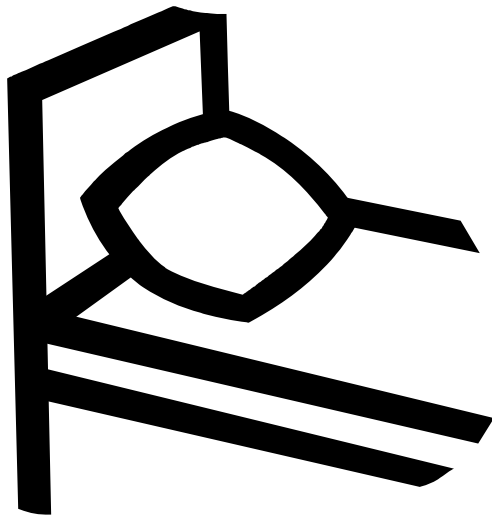


# UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS FOR CARE GIVERS (CONTINUED)

## DISPOSING OF WASTE

All items that get soiled with blood or other body fluids should be disposed of in a red plastic bag. The bag must be sealed with tape and then placed inside another red bag which should also be sealed with tape. The doctor or visiting nurse should be able to tell you how to dispose of the bags properly. Before disposing of blood or other fluids in the toilet, you should check with the local health department or sanitation department. You should even do this

even if the house has its own septic system.



## CLEANING SOILED LINEN

All linen and clothing that becomes soiled with blood or other body fluids must be washed separately from all other laundry. You should use a detergent and a germicide. Either the doctor, visiting nurse or local health department can give you information on these items.