HIVAIDS Precautions – Embalming and Morgues – Fact Sheets



WHAT PRECAUTIONS SHOULD I KNOW WHEN REQUIRED TO DO EMBALMING?

Funeral directors and mortuary attendants or any person assisting in post mortem procedures must wear gloves, masks, protective eyewear, gowns and waterproof aprons.

Consider all body fluids and tissues as potentially contaminated.

HOW SHOULD THE DECEASED BE TRANSFERRED?

- Wear disposable pants and gowns and double gloves. Wear eye protection, mask and cap if there is the possibility of splashing blood or body fluids.
- Identify body “Blood and Body Fluid Precautions”. Keep identification with body.
- Check body for intravenous lines, catheters, or colostomy bags. Take extreme care to avoid accidental cuts or splashes before shrouding the body.
- Place body in shroud and impervious body bag for transport. Do not open bag in transit.
- Remove protective clothing. Double plastic bag for incineration.

WHAT PRECAUTIONS SHOULD I TAKE WHEN EMBALMING?

- Use disposable materials.
- Remove all personal jewellery. Wear disposable pants and gowns or disposable jumpsuit with hood, double gloves, eye protection, mask and cap, shoe covers and plastic apron.
- Have instruments, puncture-resistant containers, and individual items, such as eye caps and trocar buttons, readily available. Place needed amount of cosmetics on a paper towel or wax paper sheet.
- Line garbage can with double plastic bags and place in work area.
- Use a medical grade disinfectant to disinfect all potentially contaminated objects and surfaces both during and after preparation. Discard left-over solution according to safety data sheet (SDS) directions.
- Add disinfectant solution (as per manufacturer’s instructions) to an enamel, porcelain or stainless steel bucket before embalming begins. Place

bucket underneath drainage hose from the embalming table.
- Ventilate preparation room to control exposure to formaldehyde and other volatile airborne contaminants. The room should have a dedicated ventilation exhaust and fresh air supply.
- Place body in casket immediately after restoration. Have head, arm and feet rests tightly encased in plastic.
- Assign specific tasks with one person to do suturing.
- Make arrangements for a person not involved in embalming procedures to take telephone calls and answer door.

WHAT PRECAUTIONS SHOULD I USE DURING CLEAN UP AND DISPOSAL?

- Consider all instruments and the embalming table as contaminated and potentially infectious.
- Disinfect all working surfaces and restorative and embalming instruments. Wash embalming table, floors, walls and embalming machine with hot soapy water. Autoclave instruments if possible.
- Place all disposable material in a tightly secured double plastic bag. Tag for incineration. Do not dispose with regular garbage. Wash hands with appropriate germicide.

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