HIVAIDS Precautions – Embalming and Morgues – Procedures – Fact Sheets



WHAT ARE SOME SAFE PRACTICES TO FOLLOW WHEN EMBALMING?

- Take extreme care to prevent cuts, lacerations and splashing of contaminated blood or body fluids.
- Wear two pairs of intact disposable gloves. Remove punctured, torn or leaking gloves. Wash hands thoroughly. Put on two new pairs of gloves.
- Wear safety glasses or goggles, or a face shield (with safety glasses or goggles) when there is a chance of fluids splashing.
- Carefully transfer body to table. Avoid putting undue pressure on abdomen and thorax. Slowly unwrap body. Carefully put body bag in disposal bin.
- Disinfect body with medical grade disinfectant. Wash with a germicidal soap and rinse thoroughly. Keep water pressure low to avoid splashing.
- Pack and cover open sores or lesions. Pack orifices with cotton soaked in sodium hypochlorite solution.
- Use disposable shaving equipment.
- Cover face with towel soaked in disinfectant if using injector gun.
- Cover rib ends with towel if the body was autopsied. Remove viscera bag and put into second plastic bag for disposal.
- Use electric aspirator to aspirate body fluids. Cover draining port to avoid flashback.
- Treat blood, body fluids and aspirated contents with a medical grade disinfectant for 30 minutes before flushing directly into sewer.
- Saturate immediately any spills of blood or body fluid with medical grade disinfectant. Wipe clean with disposable absorbent material such as paper towels.
- Wash body in medical grade disinfectant, rinse and towel dry. Use disposable absorbent material to dry body.
- Wrap body in plastic or plastic coveralls before dressing.
- Discard rubber or wooden-handled instruments used to apply cosmetics. Discard unused cosmetics.
- Leave embalming area immediately should you receive a cut or needle puncture. Encourage wound to bleed freely. Wash with soap and water. Treat with fresh disinfectant. Bandage. Get medical help immediately.
- Wash eyes and skin immediately with running water should they be splashed with blood or body fluids. Seek medical advice.
- Spit out immediately blood or body fluids splashed in the mouth. Rinse

mouth with water. Seek medical advice.
- Wash hands with a germicide after completing restoration procedures, after removing protective clothing and gloves, and before leaving prep room.
- Report immediately suspect fluid exposure, or a needlestick or sharp injury to a designated person or health care professional.

WHAT ARE SOME QUALITIES OF APPROPRIATE DISINFECTANTS?

- It is active, not outdated or expired.
- It will not corrode or stain instruments.
- It needs to be broad spectrum which means it is able to kill bacteria, fungi, viruses and microbes.
- It does not bleach or stain the skin.
- It is not irritating to the embalmer’s skin or respiratory tract.
- It is not inactivated by the presence of biological debris.
- Check the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) before using any product in the workplace to ensure compatibility with other products and instructions for safe use, storage and handling.

HOW DO I SAFELY DISPOSE OF USED MATERIALS?

- Check all local by-laws to ensure proper disposal of biomedical waste, hazardous waste, contaminated personal protective equipment, and potentially contaminated laundry.
- Make sure all waste containers are clearly labelled.
- Check the qualifications of the disposal company and keep all disposal records. Manifests must be maintained.

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