

# INFECTIOUS DISEASE GUIDELINES

Dixie Boys Baseball, Inc. has published these guidelines in an effort to minimize the possibility of transmission of any infectious disease during practice or games.

The guidelines primarily address blood-borne pathogens such as the Hepatitis B virus and the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). However, these guidelines also outline common sense precautions against the spread of less serious, but other contagious diseases. It is the intent and desire of the officials of the Dixie Boys Baseball program that all activity by the participants enrolled should be carried out with the safety of the environment. We encourage all volunteers who are part of these programs in any capacity to help us carry out these aims and objectives.

## GUIDELINES NOT REGULATIONS

It should be understood that these are guidelines which we would strongly recommend officials in each local league adhere to and carry out in the day-to-day operations of their leagues. We encourage each league to select a SAFETY OFFICER and to have as an official operating policy for the league the guidelines contained in this publication.

## BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGENS

Blood-borne pathogens such as Hepatitis B and HIV are serious infectious diseases which are present in blood as well as other bodily fluids such as semen, vaginal fluids and breast milk. While there are a number of such diseases, Hepatitis B and HIV are the most commonly known diseases.

Hepatitis B is a virus which results in a dangerous inflammation of the liver. Its victims can suffer long-term consequences and

recurrences and the disease can be deadly if not treated. HIV is the virus that causes AIDS or Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome which weakens the immune system, thus making a person susceptible to infections their immune systems normally would fight off. AIDS is incurable and deadly.

When giving first-aid to others, an individual should wear protective gloves (such as rubber surgical gloves) any time blood, open wounds or mucous membrane are involved. The individual should wear clean gloves for each person treated or when treating the same person more than one time.

If the individual gets someone else's blood on his skin, protective gloves should be worn and the blood wiped off with a disposable alcohol swab.

**Note: If the blood gets on a uniform during practice or a game, the uniform should be wiped with a disinfectant such as isopropyl alcohol (rubbing alcohol).**

If an individual begins to bleed during practice or a game, play must be stopped and the individual should be removed from the game. If there is blood on the dugout floor, the floor should be cleaned using a disinfectant solution of household bleach and water. The recommended mixture is ten (10) parts water to one (1) part bleach. (Example: ½ cup bleach to one (1) gallon of water.) The surface should then be rinsed with clean water to avoid participants getting the disinfectant in their eyes. The person doing this cleanup should wear protective gloves.

The individual removed from practice or a game due to bleeding must have the bleeding stopped and any wound covered before being allowed to return to the practice or game. If the bleeding begins again, the practice or game should be stopped and the potentially contaminated surfaces cleaned. The manager or umpire would be the judge as to the number of times the practice or

game would be stopped before the individual is disqualified from further participation in that practice session or game.

The person who treated injury where there is blood present or cleaned a potentially contaminated area should wash their hands with soap and hot water whether or not protective gloves are worn.

Disposable towels should be used in any cleanup. Towels, gloves and all protective materials used in the cleanup, as well as items used to stop the bleeding, should be placed in a sealed container lined with a plastic bag. These bags are not to be reused and should be disposed of on a daily basis.

Any official who gets blood on himself should do the same as the participant. A disinfectant such as isopropyl alcohol (rubbing alcohol) should be used to wipe the blood from an area.

Although Hepatitis B is a more common virus than HIV, it is HIV and AIDS more than any other disease, which has heightened public concern over blood-borne pathogens. It is concern that has prompted Dixie Boys Baseball, Inc. to develop these guidelines.

The officials of Dixie Boys Baseball, Inc. realize that league officials should be aware that it is most important to carry out the procedures in the interest of safety and the health of children who participate in our activity on a day-to-day basis. If this is done, parents and others can be assured that leagues are concerned about the total well-being of the youngsters entrusted to their care.

The precise risk of HIV transmission during exposure of open wounds or mucous membranes such as eyes, ears, nose and mouth to contaminated blood is not known. However, evidence would suggest it is extremely low. In fact, the possibility of contracting HIV in this manner is much less than the possibility of contracting Hepatitis B or other blood-borne infections.

Local league workers must understand that while it is theoretically possible for HIV to be transmitted by blood from one individual through the wound or mucous membrane of another individual, the probability of this occurring is extremely low. One must not assume, however, that the chance of transmission of HIV in this manner is zero. Proper and adequate precautions should be taken to ensure that no transmission can occur.

## **WAYS TO PREVENT THE TRANSMISSION OF BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGENS**

If blood is present, positive steps can be taken that will lessen the possibility of transmission of blood-borne pathogens, such as Hepatitis B or HIV, if the person who is bleeding has such disease.

It is most important that the adults who work with youngsters in youth baseball are aware of what steps should be taken in the event an accident occurs and there is a presence of blood. If there is blood present, this situation should be treated with respect regarding its ability to transmit infectious disease.

If the participant has an open wound on their body, they should cover this wound prior to the start of a practice or game. When this is done, the participant will decrease the risk of transmission of a blood-borne pathogen from their open wound to the open wound or mucous membrane of another person or vice versa.

It is essential that good hygiene be used by all adult and youth participants. Towels, cups and water bottles should not be shared.

## **OTHER CONTAGIONS**

Contagions such as the Influenza Virus, the Common Cold virus and the Mononucleosis virus are generally transmitted by respiratory secretions, saliva and nasal discharge. This occurs through the air when an infected person sneezes or coughs or by

oral inoculation from contaminated hands and surfaces. The possibility of becoming infected with one of these viruses is greater indoors than outdoors. If a person is infected with one of these viruses, they possibly will have an incubation period of a few hours or days. Colds and Influenza are usually known by the individual who may be affected and normal symptoms include: muscle ache, pains in the joints, fever and chills. If an individual is affected, they should not be allowed to practice or play in a game due to the weakness that would be present from these viruses. It is important to observe sound hygienic practices when this occurs and towels, cups and water bottles should not be shared among participants.

## **PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

There is available protective equipment at a reasonable cost that can be used in carrying out the suggestions as found in these guidelines. Companies that produce this protective equipment may be included in the list of “Officials Suppliers” that is accessible for teams and leagues enrolled in the programs offered through Dixie Boys Baseball, Inc. You are encouraged to learn about what is available through our suppliers to help make it possible for you to provide a safe activity for those who are a part of your program.

## **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY**

These guidelines are provided to make leagues aware of their responsibilities in the area of infectious disease control. Private companies, units of government and youth leagues are responsible for providing and complying with plans to stop the spread of infectious diseases. TAKE THIS RESPONSIBILITY SERIOUSLY. Find out what your league should be doing to protect players, coaches and volunteers.