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# BioSide Lines

FOSTERING SAFE WORK & LABORATORY PRACTICES THROUGH TRAINING & EDUCATION

## Infectious Agent Medical Response Plans

The University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW-Madison), Occupational Health Program, UW Hospital Infectious Diseases Clinic, and University Health Services (UHS) have developed medical response plans for many infectious agents used in research on campus.

These plans can be accessed on the UW-Madison Occupational Health Program webpage at: <http://www.ehs.wisc.edu/occ-resources.htm> (EH&S Home > Occupational Health > Resources > Medical Response Plans).

A UW NetID and password login is necessary to access the plans.

It is expected that information in the plans will be shared with staff who may encounter the agent during their work.

Should an exposure occur, this information should also be provided to the attending medical provider for guidance. The plans are not intended to replace any information that is currently in existing safety manuals or protocols, but to supplement them. See also the UW-Madison Office of Biological Safety website ([www.ehs.wisc.edu/bio-emergencyresponse.htm](http://www.ehs.wisc.edu/bio-emergencyresponse.htm)) for information on emergency response and the First Report of Exposure form.

In addition, a template for a Medical Alert Card is provided on the UW-Madison Occupational Health website for the medical response plans (listed at left). The template is modeled after medical alert cards used by agencies to assist their employees in alerting medical providers of possible work-related exposures to infectious agents.

Please encourage staff to fill out these cards and keep them in their possession.

In the event of an exposure involving a Select Agent, the Responsible Official (RO) (William S. Mellon) and/or an Alternate Responsible Official (ARO) should be contacted immediately to assure proper notifications and procedures are followed.

The preferred ARO contact person is Rebecca Moritz at 608-890-3468, 608-225-4005 or email at [rmoritz@fpm.wisc.edu](mailto:rmoritz@fpm.wisc.edu).

We are indebted to both UHS and the Infectious Disease Clinic for helping us increase awareness of and facilitate effective medical response to campus exposures. If you have any questions regarding the plans or have suggestions for additional agents to be included, please do not hesitate to contact the Occupational Health Officer, Jim Morrison at 263-2177 or [jmorrison@fpm.wisc.edu](mailto:jmorrison@fpm.wisc.edu)

**Plans are available for:**

- \* Adenovirus
- \* Brucella
- \* C. burnetti (Q-Fever)
- \* Dengue fever virus
- \* E. coli
- \* Herpes B virus
- \* Histoplasma
- \* Influenza virus
- \* Lentivirus
- \* SIV SHIV
- \* M. tuberculosis
- \* Toxoplasma
- \* Vaccinia

# LABORATORY SAFETY:

## *The Scoop on Poop (part 1)*

*A frank discussion of laboratory animal waste hazards, risks and safety techniques*

Our campus houses laboratories which conduct a vast amount of biomedical and agricultural animal research utilizing a variety of species. Many animals receive a broad range of experimental biological agents some of which end up in their waste products. How is that waste safely handled and where does it go?

The most common biological agents are genetically engineered viruses used as vectors to modify DNA in the recipient organism or cell lines (human or animal) used most often in cancer research. Animals are sometimes also purposefully infected with pathogens for infectious disease research, or exposed to attenuated pathogens in vaccination studies.

Modern genetically engineered viruses used as vectors for recombinant DNA research are very safe due to introduced safe guards such as replication incompetence (inability to replicate independently), deletion of genes essential to survival, the use of non-native envelope protein and packaging

into four or more plasmids.

The alterations result in a significantly lower risk of these viruses generating a replication


animal research, and are always handled at ABSL2. This is because UW-Madison adheres to the “Universal Precautions” approach to all human tissues, cells and fluids. Human tissues, cells and fluids may contain bloodborne pathogens. Cell lines and other human products can be tested for pathogens, however no testing method can detect all possible pathogens. Therefore, it is assumed that any human tissues or fluids could contain bloodborne pathogens. Once these

cells are administered to animals, the animal has the potential to carry these bloodborne pathogens.

Animals infected with agents which are pathogenic to humans, or are significant agricultural pathogens or have other harmful environmental impacts will be classified at ABSL2 or higher containment.

For additional information on Bloodborne Pathogens or other research animal safety information, please go to the Occupational Health website <http://www.ehs.wisc.edu/occhealth.htm>

*“The Scoop on Poop” is a multi-part series BioSide Lines collaboration between the UW-Madison Office of Biological Safety and the Occupational Health Research Safety training groups*



competent virus. While most of these viral vectors may initially require the animal to be classified at animal biosafety level 2 (ABSL2), because of the built-in safety features, a reduction in status to animal biosafety level 1 (ABSL1) after a short amount of time is usually allowed.

Although many viral vectors are derived from viruses that infect humans, they are developed such that there is a significantly lower risk of a productive infection occurring. The use of altered human viruses in animals also gives an additional level of natural containment, as many cannot replicate outside of their natural host (humans).

Human cells are also utilized in



# Biosafety Practices:

## *That's a Great Pedicure, but.....*

The record heat of summer in Madison means we all look for more opportunities to cool off. Naturally we wear lighter clothes for work and play – shorts, tank tops, sandals or flip-flops are everywhere on campus. Unfortunately, not every workplace is compatible or safe with summer attire.

While we all want to play it cool, it is important to remember that if you work in a laboratory, your clothing and footwear serve as critical protection from chemicals, biologicals or other hazards in the lab.



Closed-toe shoes must always be worn in the laboratory, even when “just passing through”. Bare legs expose skin to contact with

hazardous chemicals, biologicals or contact injuries in the lab – a best practice is to wear long pants or long skirt underneath your lab coat. And, of course, always remember to wear your lab coat and laboratory eye protection.

We all realize that laboratories can be warm in summer months – the key to is to think ahead and take steps to stay comfortable:

- ♦ Bring a change of clothes and shoes to wear in the lab, so you are able to change back into summer clothes after work.
- ♦ Wear light clothing so you are comfortable beneath the lab coat.
- ♦ Take breaks and cool off!
- ♦ Step outside the lab, remove the lab coat and find a cool place to sit and sip some water.

## OBS Update:

### *OBS Staff Changes & IBC News*

The Office of Biological Safety (OBS) bids goodbye to Nancy Schensky. After 32 years of working as an administrative assistant for our office, Nancy made the decision to retire. We wish Nancy happiness in her retirement, and offer our thanks for her many years of hard work and dedication to OBS.

In other news, Stephanie Kutz, one of our own, has stepped up to take the position of Assistant Biosafety Officer, a position that was once held by Jason Keaton. Stephanie has made the transition smoothly and con-

tinues to advance our department with her experience, expertise and leadership.

The OBS would also like to welcome the addition of Lisa Burley to our staff. Lisa will join Tara Schnell as a biosafety trainer. With a background in infectious disease research and science education, she will be an asset to our training program.

Finally, we welcome to the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), Nathan Pofahl. Nathan will serve as a public member of the IBC; he lives and works in Madison.





## Q & A:

### *Biosafety Protocol Expiration and Irradiator Use*

**Q:** How long is my protocol registration valid?

**A:** Biological safety protocols are valid for three years after registration with the Office of Biological

Safety. Usually, OBS typically sends notification to Principal Investigators (PIs) reminding them that their protocol will expire. However, it is a good idea to keep current on all of your protocol expiration dates.

**Q:** If my protocol has expired can I get an extension?

**A:** The Biological Safety Officer has the option to grant protocol expiration date extensions for extraneous circumstances. However, even though extensions may be granted, allowing your protocol to expire may result in difficulties in the release of your grant funds or approval of grant applications. Please remember to renew your protocol at least three months prior to the expiration date to ensure that there are no funding issues.

**Q:** If I will be using the irradiator, do I need update my biosafety protocol?

**A:** All rooms used for your research should be listed in Section III of your biosafety protocol. The laboratory should have a SOP for using the irradiator that describes packaging of samples, transport, and procedure for handling spills.

**Q:** What about hazard communication for irradiator use areas?

**A:** Appropriate hazard signage should be posted outside the door when materials are present in the room.

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**UWBioBob**



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