

Infectious and Environmental Hazard Safety

Purpose:

The purpose of the Policy is to identify COM and University practices to mitigate exposures to infectious and environmental hazards, educate about the prevention of exposures, and outline appropriate steps to follow in case of an exposure.

Scope:

This Policy shall apply to Duquesne University College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM) students, faculty, and staff.

Responsibility:

The responsibility to review and revise this Policy is established by the COM leadership and approved by the COM Dean and Duquesne University Provost. It is effective as of the date noted and shall remain effective until amended or terminated by the COM Dean or University Provost.

Policy:

Safety and Education

COM students are required to complete training on bloodborne pathogens and other environmental and infectious hazards annually as directed. COM faculty and staff are also required to complete training as assigned based upon their required duties and clinical sites as applicable. Students, faculty, and staff may be required to complete Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) modules assigned by their clinical sites and research labs. Students, faculty, and staff are expected to complete all training modules and educational sessions according to assigned deadlines. Failure to complete assignments according to deadlines will be addressed according to the COM's Policy on Student Professionalism and Ethical Conduct.

Exposure Prevention and Management

COM students, faculty, and staff are expected to follow all Duquesne University and COM expectations and guidelines regarding the mitigation of exposures to bloodborne pathogens and other environmental and infectious hazards within all settings of the COM including but not limited to classrooms, research labs, teaching/skills labs, standardized patient rooms, and simulation areas. COM students, faculty, and staff who are engaged in assigned clinical activities are also expected to utilize appropriate clinical precautions, wear appropriate personal protective equipment, and abide by applicable policies and procedures of the COM, University, and the clinical training site.

Training and Prevention

COM requires the following training and prevention measures:

1. Students are required to complete training on bloodborne pathogens and other environmental and infectious hazards as assigned.

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2. Students, faculty, and staff are required to participate in orientation programs offered by their clinical site or lab and must complete any required training and/or employee health and/or infection prevention protocols required by the site.
3. Students, faculty, and staff are required to utilize universal precautions in all clinical encounters. Students, faculty, and staff must use appropriate personal protective equipment and must abide by specific isolation or other precautions in place for specific locations, patients, and/or units in educational, research, and clinical settings.

Exposures:

In the event of accidental exposure, students, faculty, and staff are expected to follow the signs and labels based upon the infectious or biological hazard and the guidelines of their laboratory, classroom, or clinical site to take the appropriate steps to immediately address the exposure. If the exposure occurs in a clinical setting, students, faculty, and staff should then follow the guidelines of the site to receive additional care in an emergency room setting. Additional guidelines related to bloodborne pathogen exposures are also included below.

Bloodborne Pathogen Exposures:

COM Students, faculty, and staff who have been exposed to blood and other bodily fluids (occupational exposure) must comply with the University's rules and process for reporting the incident, which have been incorporated herein. In the case of exposure, the exposed individual must undergo a prompt evaluation to ensure that the true risk of exposure is ascertained.

The CDC defines occupational exposure as a percutaneous injury (e.g., needlestick or cut with a sharp object) or contact of the mucous membrane, or skin with compromised integrity (e.g., scratched, chapped, abraded, or irritated with dermatitis) with blood, tissue or other fluids that are potentially infectious. Injuries may occur when performing invasive procedures, providing therapy, administering medications, changing dressings, working with laboratory specimens, providing acute care following an injury or trauma, or handling linens or dressings that are moist with potentially infectious fluids.¹

According to the CDC, wounds and skin sites that have been in contact with blood or bodily fluids should be immediately washed with soap and water, and mucous membranes should be generously flushed with water.

Following this cleansing procedure, the exposed person should immediately notify their supervisor (Medical Education Office for MS1 & MS2 students or Physician supervisor/Clinical Affairs Office for MS3 & MS4 students). The exposed person will generally be temporarily excused from patient care, classroom, or laboratory duties, except that clinical faculty are expected to comply with the protocol of their clinical site. The exposed person should report immediately to the nearest emergency department or Duquesne University Health Services unless the exposure occurs in a hospital. For exposures occurring in a hospital, the person should report immediately to the designated location (example: ER or Employee Health) and follow the protocols outlined by the clinical site.

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The exposed person will be asked to follow the protocol for the type of exposure which may include providing blood for baseline HIV and hepatitis testing and providing detailed information regarding how the exposure occurred. Specifically, he/she may be asked what bodily fluid was encountered, the type of equipment that was being used, exactly how the injury occurred, as well as any medical information that is available regarding the source patient. Any exposed person should comply with requests for recommended follow-up treatment and testing which may continue for 6 - 12 months, depending on the degree of the exposure.

Notifying Duquesne University of Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure

In addition to the procedures described above for immediate care, an exposed student must notify his/her clinical coordinator within 24 hours following the exposure. Students must also complete the University's incident report form. Here is a link to the Duquesne University [forms page](#) that has the [incident report form](#). The student will be asked to provide information regarding the injury, source patient, treatment, and testing. Except in extraordinary circumstances, an exposed student will be responsible for all costs incurred for testing, treatment, and follow-up.

An exposed faculty or staff member must follow the protocol based upon their location at the time of exposure, the clinical site's employee health, or the nearest emergency department. Faculty and staff must also complete the Duquesne University incident report form. Here is a link to the Duquesne University [forms page](#) that has the [incident report form](#). Except in extraordinary circumstances, an exposed faculty or staff member will be responsible for all costs incurred for testing, treatment, and follow-up.

¹ Updated U.S. Public Health Service Guidelines for the Management of Occupational Exposures to HBV, HCV, and HIV and Recommendations for Postexposure Prophylaxis. MMWR June 29, 2001/ 50 (RR11); 1-42

Effective Date: 11/1/2022

Revised:

Revision: 0

Wellness, Mental Health and Fatigue Mitigation

Purpose:

The purpose of the Policy is to inform COM students, faculty, and staff about available resources and COM practices to support wellness and mental health, and mitigate fatigue.

Scope:

This Policy shall apply to Duquesne University College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM) faculty, staff and students.

Responsibility:

The responsibility to review and revise this Policy is established by the COM leadership and approved by the COM Dean and Duquesne University Provost. It is effective as of the date noted and shall remain effective until amended or terminated by the COM Dean or University Provost.

Policy:

1. Wellness and Mental Health Resources

There are a number of resources on campus related to the health and well-being of all members of the University community, including the resources identified below. The following is not intended to be an exhaustive list, but rather is intended to provide a reference for COM students, faculty, and staff relating to certain health and wellbeing resources:

- a. Duquesne University's Center for Student Wellbeing: Duquesne University's Center for Student Wellbeing is a center within the Division of Student Life and includes Health Services, Counseling Services, and Recreation services to promote health and well-being for the mind, body, and spirit. Information regarding the Center for Student Wellbeing is available on their [website](#).
- b. Health Services: Health Services is available to all full-time University students. Detailed information regarding the services provided by Duquesne University Health Services can be found on their [website](#). Health Services provides telehealth as an option for student visits and care when on campus or off campus including all clinical rotation sites.
- c. Counseling Services: University [Counseling Services](#) offers free confidential personal counseling services and is an available resource for University students. Counseling Services provides telehealth as an option for care when on campus or off campus including all clinical rotation sites. In addition, crisis support is available to all students, faculty, and staff 24 hours per day, 7 days per week by calling ReSolve Crisis Service at 1.888.796.8226. Note also that each clinical site or region provides students with access to care with the nearby hospital, emergency department, physician practices, and Federal Qualified Health Centers (where applicable), and prior to beginning clinical rotations, students are provided a list of nearby physical and mental health resources by the COM Office of Clinical Affairs.

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- d. Power Center Recreation and Fitness Facility: All students, faculty, and staff have access to an 80,000 square foot recreation and [fitness facility](#) featuring an array of fitness classes, cardio machines, multiple weight lifting options, an indoor track, and more.
- e. Spiritan Campus Ministry: The Spiritan Campus Ministry seeks to welcome all Duquesne community members, regardless of denomination or faith tradition. The [Spiritan Campus Ministry](#) offers liturgical and worship ministries, faith-sharing programs, and social outreach opportunities.
- f. Human Resources: The [Office of Human Resources](#) provides information and resources for all faculty and staff related to employee benefits, wellness programs, learning and development opportunities, and an employee assistance program.
- g. COM Employee Education: The COM provides annual faculty and staff educational programming based on needs assessments. Such programming is tied to the COM's mission and strategic plan.
- h. COM Student Affairs: COM students are supported by a COM Student Affairs Department that collaborates with [University Student Services](#). The Student Affairs Department at the COM supports students academically, emotionally, and spiritually through academic counseling, mentorship programming, student government, and student interest groups. This includes programming for all medical students including orientation, fatigue mitigation, financial aid counseling, and study/test-taking skills.

2. Fatigue Mitigation

Any student, faculty, or staff member may initiate a discussion regarding fatigue mitigation by raising the concern with the COM Director of Student Affairs or their supervisor. Once a fatigue concern has been reported, the Director of Student Affairs or the supervisor will discuss the concerns with the student/employee and together will establish a plan for fatigue mitigation.

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