

Infectious Diseases Policy (Blood-borne)

**Policy endorsed by Executive:
November 2025**

**Policy approved by NSWIS Board:
November 2025**


**A/CEO: _____
(signature)**

**Next formal review by Executive:
September 2027**

Policy Author and Contact person for more information:

1. Chief Medical Officer

NOTE: Any agreed changes to the Policy approved by the NSWIS Board between the date of issue and the date for next review are to be updated and made available to all staff for advice.

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Revision History

This policy, and all related appendices, will be reviewed as it is deemed appropriate, but no less frequently than every 24 months.

Policy review will be undertaken by the Chief Medical Officer.

Date	Version	Reviewed by	Changes made
1 February 2019	1.1	Chief Medical Officer	Policy updated
12 April 2021	1.2	Chief Medical Officer	Policy updated
13 June 2023	1.3	Chief Medical Officer	Policy reviewed no changes
28 October 2025	1.3	Chief Medical Officer	Policy reviewed no changes

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy outlines a procedure for minimizing the risk of blood-borne infectious diseases, with particular reference to HIV (AIDS), Hepatitis B & C, and other bloodborne disease transmission.
- 1.2 It is strongly recommended that all sports medicine staff, coaches, team managers, administrators, athletes, and their parents be informed of this policy and adopt its common sense recommendations.

2. Background

- 2.1 A number of infectious diseases can be transmitted via blood during body contact and collision sports. The more serious include Hepatitis and HIV infections. These diseases may be spread by contact between broken skin or mucous membranes and infected blood (as well as saliva and sexual secretions).

Note: there is no evidence that sweat/urine or tears will transmit Hepatitis B or HIV.

- 2.2 It is important to remember that more common diseases, such as the “common cold”, flu and herpes simplex may also be spread during body contact sports.

3. Policy

- 3.1 The following are principles recommended by the Australian National Council on AIDS & Related Diseases (ANCARD) to help further reduce the low possibility of HIV or viral hepatitis transmission while participating in sports which involve direct body contact or where bleeding may be expected to occur:
 - i. If an athlete has a skin bleeding wound, it must immediately be reported to a responsible official, then first aid or medical attention sought.
 - ii. If a bleeding wound occurs, the individual’s participation must be interrupted until the bleeding has been stopped and the wound is both rinsed with plenty of water and, if dirty, washed with soap then covered with a waterproof dressing. If bleeding cannot be controlled completely, the athlete should not be allowed to continue playing.
 - iii. It is important that whoever deals with injuries should wear gloves.
- 3.2 NSWIS will minimise athletes’ exposure to infectious diseases by adhering to all recommended guidelines from relevant authorities regarding the prevention of infectious diseases, promoting practices that reduce the transmission of infection and supporting immunisation and implement effective hygiene practices.

4. Athletes

- 4.1 It is every athlete’s responsibility to maintain strict personal hygiene at all times, in all activities on and off the field to limit the spread of disease.
- 4.2 It is strongly recommended that all athletes involved in contact/collision sports and playing under adult rules be vaccinated against Hepatitis B if they did not complete the full schedule of Hepatitis B injections during childhood.
- 4.3 All athletes with a past history of blood-borne infectious diseases such as Hepatitis or HIV are strongly advised to obtain confidential advice and clearance from a doctor prior to participation.
- 4.4 Open cuts and abrasions occurring during a match or training should be reported and managed immediately, with irrigation to clean the area and compression / dressing to cease further bleeding and protect against possible transmission of infection.

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- 4.5 If the bleeding cannot be controlled the athlete must cease playing/training.
- 4.6 Athletes should avoid unnecessary contact with the blood of other athletes.

5. Daily Training Environment Areas

- 5.1 It is the responsibility of NSWIS staff and coaches to ensure that a hygienic environment is maintained
 - Promote hand washing
 - Daily cleaning of the Training facility and Toilets
 - Wearing gloves (when in direct contact with bodily fluids)
 - Appropriate handling and preparation of food.
- 5.2 Athletes should wear enclosed shoes and use their own towel for each workout.
- 5.3 The practice of spitting is NOT permitted.
- 5.4 All clothing, equipment and surfaces contaminated by blood must be treated as potentially infectious and treated accordingly.
- 5.5 Sharing of towels, shaving razors, face washers and drink containers should not occur. Shared drink containers may transmit meningococcal disease and other infectious diseases.
- 5.6 It is strongly recommended that all personnel working with teams should be vaccinated against Hepatitis B and know their immune status.
- 5.7 In all training areas, open cuts and abrasions must be reported to medical staff and treated immediately.

6. Implementation

- 6.1 NSWIS coaches and staff must report all open cuts and abrasions to Physiotherapy or Medical staff and/or Chief Medical Officer at the first available opportunity.
- 6.2 Medical records are to be entered into the Athlete Management System (AMS) and if an incident occurs in the NSWIS Training Centre the Register of Injuries must be completed with a copy given to the People & Culture Manager.
- 6.3 Those attending to bleeding athletes should wear disposable gloves when direct contact is anticipated with blood or body substances, mucous membranes, or non-intact skin, or when handling items such as towels or clothing contaminated with blood or body substances.
- 6.4 Gloves must be changed and discarded as soon as they are torn or punctured and after contact with each athlete. Hands must be washed after removal and disposal of gloves.
- 6.5 Medical/First Aid kits must contain disposable protective gloves and plastic bags for disposal of contaminated equipment/clothing.
- 6.6 Disposable resuscitation devices should be available and accessible. They should be used for anyone requiring mouth-to-mouth cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Any CPR training should include instruction in the use of resuscitation devices to prevent direct mouth-to-mouth contact between the injured person and the resuscitator.

7. Education

- 7.1 There is an obligation upon all organisations to provide suitable information relating to the risk factors for and prevention strategies against blood-borne infectious diseases. Additional information may be obtained from NSWIS Medical staff or the NSW Department of Health.

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- 7.2 NSWIS will ensure all staff and persons working at NSWIS conform to the Blood-borne Infectious Disease Policy.
- 7.3 NSWIS will ensure confidentiality relating to any personal or health related information obtained by staff in relation to any NSWIS athlete.

8. Action to be taken in the event of a blood spill

If the following accident where bleeding occurs and if;	Action
Skin is penetrated or broken	Wash the area well with soap and water only. If water is not available a 70% alcohol hand rub should be used.
Clothes are blood stained	Blood-stained clothes should be changed for clean ones once the wound has been treated. They should be handled with disposable gloves and soaked (e.g. in a disinfectant such as Miltons or Napisan or hydrogen peroxide) before washing in a domestic machine on a hot water cycle.
Blood gets on the skin	Irrespective of whether there are cuts or abrasions wash well with soap and water.
Eyes are contaminated	With the eyes open rinse the area gently but thoroughly with water or normal saline
Blood gets in the mouth	Spit it out then rinse the mouth with water several times.

Where there is an additional concern about infection, medical advice should be sought from a physician or clinic with experience in the management of HIV or other bloodborne diseases.

References

- Sports Medicine Australia (SMA)
- Australian National Council on AIDS & Related Diseases (ANCARD)
- NRL - Infectious Disease Policy
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- National Quality Standard 2011