



## NIHB PROJECT FIRSTLINE TRIBAL INFECTION CONTROL

**HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS (HIV)** is a virus that attacks the body's ability to protect itself from disease. HIV destroys the human immune system by attacking cells known as T cells. T cells are part of the first line of defense that our immune system has to fight infection. HIV is transmitted through bodily fluids, such as blood. These fluids must come into contact with mucous membranes, damaged tissue, or be directly injected into the body's bloodstream (from a needle or syringe) for transmission to occur. The most common way that this "bloodborne" virus spreads in healthcare is when an infected patient's blood is on a sharp item that causes a needlestick or a break in the skin (cut or lesion) and then enters their body, causing a new infection.

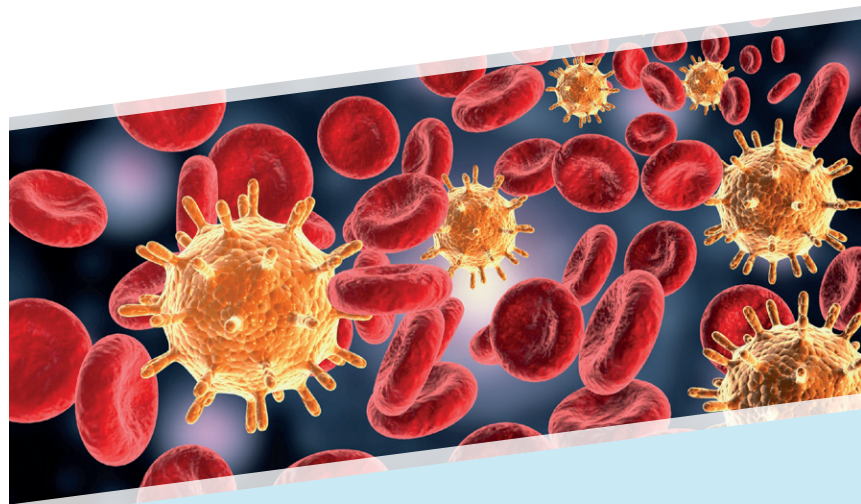
### WHERE IS THE RISK?

Viruses like HIV can spread when contaminated blood is on a sharp item such as a needle or scalpel

Reusing needles or syringes is especially risky because germs in the blood can be spread from one person to another

### TASKS INVOLVING THE BLOOD:

- Putting in an IV
- Giving an injection
- Surgery and procedures
- Changing soiled laundry
- Accidental needlestick injuries, or infected body fluid coming into contact with the broken skin or mucous membranes of another person
- Wound care
- Finger sticks (diabetes testing)



### HOW TRIBAL HEALTHCARE WORKERS CAN TAKE ACTION TO REDUCE RISK:

- Proper hand hygiene
- Use of personal protective equipment (PPE) Such as gloves
- Safe injection practices
- Maintain a clean and sanitary workplace
- Textile management
- Routine HIV Testing



[nihb.org/project-firstline](http://nihb.org/project-firstline)



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