Personal protective equipment (PPE)

LCC IPC Guidance
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Importance of personal protective equipment (PPE)

What is PPE?
PPE is equipment which protects you from clients' blood, body fluids, secretions or excretions. Examples of PPE include gloves, aprons, eye and face protection.

Why wear PPE?
PPE is important as it protects the client and yourself from the transmission of harmful microorganisms, such as norovirus, MRSA, E.coli, etc.

Gloves
- Gloves must be worn for invasive procedures, contact with sterile areas, open skin or mucous membranes, and all activities that have been assessed as carrying a risk of exposure to blood, body fluids, secretions or excretions, or to sharp or contaminated equipment.
- Gloves must be worn as single-use items.
- They must be put on immediately before an episode of client contact or treatment and removed as soon as the activity is completed.
- Gloves must be changed between caring for different clients, and between different care or treatment activities for the same client.

Aprons
- A disposable plastic apron must be worn if there is a risk that clothing may be exposed to blood, body fluids, secretions or excretions.
- Disposable plastic aprons must be worn as single-use items, for one procedure or one episode of direct client care and then disposed of correctly.

Masks & goggles
- Masks and goggles must be worn where there is a risk of blood, body fluids, secretions or excretions splashing into the face and eyes.
- Respiratory protective equipment, for example a particulate filter mask, must be used when clinically indicated, but are rarely required in social care.