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The Royal Australian  
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College of Ophthalmologists

# Infection Control in Surgery Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV

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## Infection Control in Surgery – Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV

The policy on infection control in surgery – hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV, developed by the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons has been accepted as policy by The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists:

- Surgeons who perform invasive procedures should be aware of their HIV/Hepatitis B / Hepatitis C status by routine and regular (annual) serological testing and if susceptible to Hepatitis B, it is strongly recommended they undergo a course of Hepatitis B immunisation.
- Surgeons who are HIV antibody or HbeAg or Hepatitis C PCR positive, and are considered to be infectious should not perform invasive procedures or operations. They may provide these services to patients who have the same infections.
- The restriction on surgeons who are Hepatitis C PCR positive should remain until following treatment the surgeon has been shown to be PCR negative on at least two successive occasions one month apart. PCT testing should continue on a regular basis for at least a further twelve months.
- Surgeons are at risk from patients by these viruses when performing invasive procedures. The risk is extremely high with Hepatitis B, less with Hepatitis C and least with HIV.
- Active immunisation against Hepatitis B is available, but your immune status against this dangerous virus should be confirmed by blood test.
- As yet, there is no active immunisation against Hepatitis C or HIV.
- Needle stick injuries, involving known or suspected HIV positive, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C patients, must be immediately reported so that appropriate action may be taken.
- All health care settings must have an arrangement in place for this assessment, and a review process to identify methods of reducing the number of such incidents.
- It would be wise for all doctors to establish an adequate level of personal disability insurance.

These guidelines have been originally developed in conjunction with NSW Department of Health.

### Record of amendments to this document

Page	Details of Amendment	Date amended
Entire document	Created	05/2006
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