POLICY & PROCEDURE

SUBJECT: Work Restrictions for the Breast Feeding and Pregnant Health Care Worker

POLICY No: EH 1100

PAGE:

DATE OF ORIGIN: 3/99

LAST DATE REVIEWED: 02/09

LAST DATE REVISED: 03/11

NEXT REVIEW DATE:

DISTRIBUTION: [ ] Administrative Manual (# will need to be added.)

REQUIRED REVIEW: Infection Prevention IDT/HR

Purpose:
To promote the safety of the breast feeding and/or pregnant HCW and unborn fetus in the work setting.
Reduce the breast feeding and pregnant HCW risk for exposure to potentially hazardous drugs, radiation, waste gases and infectious agents.

Supportive Data:
CDC MMWR 2003(rr-17):65 Appendix B; immunizations strongly recommended for health-care personnel (HCP).
NIOSH publication 2004-165: Preventing Occupational Exposures to Antineoplastic and other Hazardous Drug. September 2004
APIC Infection Control and Applied Epidemiology Principles and Practices 2009 Chapter 109
   Protocol 751.00 Cytotoxic Administration Procedure for Non Oncology Units
   Protocol 753.00 Cytotoxic Waste Disposal/Spill Removal Procedure for Non-Oncology Units
   Protocol 918.5 Cytotoxic Drug handling and Disposal Protocol on Non-Oncology Units
   Pharmacy Proc IV.3.6.
   Policy # 250 Diagnostic Imaging Standards- Acknowledgment of Pregnancy Guideline
   Policy # 163 Influenza Immunization Policy.

Policy:
occupational exposure risk categories for the breast feeding and pregnant health care worker are exposure to potentially hazardous drugs, radiation, waste gases and infectious agents. Risk reduction strategies are category specific.

Potentially dangerous drugs:
1. Pregnant and breast-feeding personnel will not be allowed to mix cytotoxic agents.
2. Pregnant and breast-feeding personnel will not be allowed to dispose of cytotoxic agents including handling of patients’ waste during and till the last 48 hours after completion of cytotoxic therapy.
3. Breast feeding personnel or staff members actively trying to conceive (male or female) are recommended to refrain from administering cytotoxic agents.
4. Staff member actively trying to conceive (male or female) are recommended to refrain from mixing cytotoxic agents.

Waste Gas:
1. Peri operative Department per 1988 OSHA requirement, all employees including breast feeding and pregnant employees annually are informed of potential adverse effects of exposure to waste anesthetic gases.

Radiation:
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The National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements (NCRP) has recommended that the exposure to the fetus of a pregnant radiation worker be limited to 500 millirems (mrem) during the entire pregnancy.

1. Monitoring will be in place to prevent fetus of a pregnant employee exposed to more than 500 mrem during the entire pregnancy.
2. Pregnant workers performing fluoroscopy will be advised that a wrap-around style of lead apron will provide a very high degree of protection against x-rays, and that they may safely continue to work in fluoroscopy while wearing such an apron.
3. Pregnant workers exposed to more penetrating forms of radiation, such as employees working in Nuclear Medicine or Radiation Therapy should consider the use of portable shielding and distance to reduce their exposure.

Infectious agent:
Immune pregnant healthcare workers (HCW) are at no greater risk of acquiring an infection than immune health care workers who are not pregnant when caring for patients with infectious diseases.
Pregnant healthcare workers should be able to care for all patients with the following exceptions:
1. Restrict from the care of patients infected with human parvovirus B19 in aplastic crisis
2. Restrict from the care of patients receiving aerosolized ribavirin, or aerosolized pentamidine

Responsibility:
Manager:
1. Encourage employees to voluntarily report their pregnancy in writing to their manager.
2. Comply with HR policy and clinical policies and procedures including practicing standard precautions and transmission based precautions.
3. Comply with all Employee Health Policies
4. Comply with department specific policies regarding the pregnant, breast-feeding or attempting to conceive health care worker.

Employees:
1. Voluntarily report their pregnancy in writing to their manager. The employee may withdraw their declaration of pregnancy at any time
2. Comply with HR policy and clinical policies and procedures including practicing standard precautions and transmission based precautions.
3. Comply with all Employee Health Policies
4. Comply with department specific policies regarding the pregnant, breast-feeding or attempting to conceive health care worker
5. Maintain current knowledge of personal disease immune status of vaccine preventable diseases
6. Participate annually in the Influenza Immunization program.

Employee Health:
1. Interview employees and assesses occupational health status including disease immunity status during new hire occupational health interview
2. Conduct infectious disease exposure risk assessment upon notification of suspected exposure event per INFECTIOUS DISEASE EXPOSURE PROTOCOL 154
3. Perform event management including referral for medical evaluation and/or treatment as necessary to primary OB MD.
4. Provide counseling and follow-up appropriate to event.
5. Initiates and maintains employee infectious disease exposure records.