

Information for patients who have received an unexpected blood transfusion

Note: This leaflet should be read alongside the NHS Blood and Transplant patient information leaflet **'Will I need a blood transfusion?'**

While you were in hospital, it was necessary for you to receive a blood transfusion. There are many reasons why patients may need a transfusion, some of which are discussed in the 'Will I need a blood transfusion?' leaflet. However, do please ask a member of your healthcare team about why you needed a blood transfusion. They will be able to answer any questions you may have.

Are blood transfusions safe?

Yes, the risk that a blood transfusion may make you ill is very low. More information about any potential infection risks, and all the measures that are taken to ensure your safety, is included in the leaflet 'Will I need a blood transfusion?'.

I'm a blood donor. Can I still donate?

As a precautionary measure to reduce the risk of transmitting variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (vCJD), people who have received a blood transfusion since 1980 are not currently able to donate blood.

Do I need to tell my doctor?

The hospital should include information in the discharge letter to your GP to tell them that you have had a blood transfusion, and to explain why it was carried out. The hospital should give you a copy of this letter; if they don't, you can ask the hospital for a copy.

Additional information

If you are interested in finding out more about blood transfusion and have access to the internet, you may find the following websites useful:

NHS Choices

www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Blood-transfusion/Pages/Introduction.aspx

NHS Blood and Transplant – Blood Website

www.nhsbt.nhs.uk/what-we-do/blood-transfusion/

UK Transfusion Services

www.transfusionguidelines.org.uk/index.aspx

We would welcome your feedback and comments on this leaflet. You can contact us in the following ways:

By post to:

Customer Services, NHS Blood and Transplant, Part Academic Block – Level 2,
John Radcliffe Hospital, Headley Way, Headington, Oxford OX3 9BQ

By email to: nhsbt.customerservice@nhsbt.nhs.uk

Or by phone: **01865 381010**

This leaflet was prepared by NHS Blood and Transplant in collaboration with the National Blood Transfusion Committee. Further supplies can be obtained by accessing <https://hospital.nhsbtleaflets.co.uk>

Individual copies of this leaflet can be obtained by calling **01865 381010**.

NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) is a Special Health Authority within the NHS, and provides the blood that patients receive. In order to plan for future blood demands, information about which patients receive blood needs to be gathered. We may ask a hospital or GP to provide limited medical information on a sample of patients who have received blood transfusions.

Any information that is passed on to NHSBT is held securely, and the rights of these patients are protected under the Data Protection Act (1998).

NHS Blood and Transplant

NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) saves and improves lives by providing a safe and reliable supply of blood components, organs, stem cells, tissues and related services to the NHS and other UK health services.

We manage the UK-wide voluntary donation system for blood, tissues, organs and stem cells, and turn these donations into products that can be used safely to save lives or radically improve the quality of people's lives.

We rely on thousands of members of the public who voluntarily donate their blood, organs, tissues and stem cells. Their generosity means each year we're able to supply around 2 million units of blood to hospitals in England and 7,500 organ and tissue donations within the UK, which save or improve thousands more people's lives.

For more information

Visit nhsbt.nhs.uk

Email enquiries@nhsbt.nhs.uk

Call **0300 123 23 23**