

New  
York  
Hospital  
Queens

**Facts You  
Should  
Know  
About  
Blood  
Transfusion**



New York Hospital Queens  
Blood Donor Center

(718) 670-1007

### **Why would I need a blood transfusion?**

Blood transfusions are given to replace blood that has been lost, or to correct serious or life threatening conditions due to low blood counts. Below are the most commonly given blood components:

1. red blood cells for bleeding or anemia
2. platelets for bleeding, or its prevention
3. plasma or cryoprecipitate for bleeding, or its prevention

### **Where does the blood come from?**

Blood is donated by carefully screened volunteers-- no one is paid for donating blood. At present, there is no artificial blood available, so all blood and blood components must come from a human blood donor.

### **Is the blood supply safe?**

Receiving a blood transfusion is safer now than ever before.

As part of the screening process, before donating, prospective donors must answer detailed questions about their medical history and present health. Also, all donated blood is tested for syphilis, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, HIV and HTLV.

Because of the extensive donor questioning and viral testing, the risk of contracting any infectious disease from blood transfusion is very small. The approximate risk per unit transfused for HIV is 1 in 1,800,000; for Hepatitis C the risk is 1 in 1,600,000 and for Hepatitis B the risk is 1 in 220,000 (JAMA, 2003). Other more common side effects of transfusion are hives and fever. Your physician can provide you with additional details.

### **Are there any other options available?**

Yes, there are several alternatives to standard transfusion:

1. Autologous Blood – With Autologous blood, you are transfused with your *own* blood. This is often considered the safest options for many patients. There are two major types of Autologous blood:

- Pre-deposit or Pre-donating blood is the most common form of Autologous transfusion. Many patients are able to give their own blood ahead of time. This program would start several weeks before a scheduled surgery. You would come to the Blood Donor Center and give blood for yourself. This blood is reserved for you in case you need a transfusion. Most patients donate between one and three units of blood, depending on what their physician requests. Each donation is about one week apart. Due to special handling required for processing, a fee will be charged for Autologous donations. This fee is covered by most health insurance plans.
- Intraoperative autologous transfusion includes the use of Cell Saver machines during your surgery. Your blood is 'recycled' and used for transfusion back to you. Your physician will be able to give you additional details about this and other 'bloodless surgery' techniques.

2. Directed Donor Blood -- You may have blood donated specifically for you by family members and friends. All directed donors must be healthy and meet all FDA requirements for blood donation. All Directed donor blood is tested for syphilis, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, HIV and HTLV. For additional information on Directed Donation, ask for the NYHQ brochure "Facts You Should Know About Directed Donation".

### **How do I sign up for the Autologous and/or Directed Blood Donor Programs?**

If you are interested in the Autologous program, please talk to your physician, and ask that a Physician's Authorization Form be completed. Please call the New York Hospital Queens Blood Donor Center to make the necessary appointments for both Directed and Autologous donations. For further information, please dial 670-1007.

### **How do I arrange for Intraoperative Autologous transfusions?**

Please ask your physician about possible hemodilution and intraoperative blood salvage/ Cell Saver procedures.

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**Autologous and Directed donations are  
taken by appointment only. For an  
appointment, please call:  
(718) 670 – 1007**

**NYHQ Blood Donor Center Hours:  
Monday, Thursday, Friday  
9:00 AM – 5:00 PM  
(Last donor registered at 4:00 PM)**

**Tuesday and Wednesday  
9:00 AM – 9:00 PM  
(Last donor registered at 8:00 PM)**

**We will be glad to answer any questions  
you or your directed donors may have  
about blood transfusions.**

**New York Hospital Queens  
Blood Donor Center  
(8th Floor South, off Red Elevators)  
56-45 Main Street  
Flushing, NY 11355-5095**

**Telephone: (718) 670-1007 Fax: (718) 661-7977**