

Patient Blood Management

Information for patients



What is Patient Blood Management?

Patient Blood Management (PBM) is a standard of care that focuses on measures to reduce or avoid the need for a blood transfusion if possible. However, if a transfusion is needed, PBM makes sure that patients are given only what they really need and that the transfusion is given safely.

Why is Patient Blood Management good for patients?

Recent studies suggest that if PBM is followed and transfusion is reduced or avoided, patients have:

- fewer complications
- faster recoveries
- shorter stays in hospital.



Why is Patient Blood Management good for the blood supply?

PBM conserves the use of donated blood for those who really need it and reduces costs for the NHS.

How does Patient Blood Management work?

PBM involves three basic principles, these are:

1. Optimising your red blood cells before treatment

This includes making sure you are as healthy as possible before surgery or treatment to help you recover afterwards. To increase your body's own capabilities, improving your iron intake in your diet, might help in your recovery. If this is being considered, please ask for a copy of the 'Iron in your diet' patient information leaflet produced by NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT). It also includes identifying and treating anaemia well in advance of you having any planned surgery or medical treatment. Anaemia is associated with a shortage of red blood cells which carry oxygen around the body. Further information can be found in the 'Anaemia' patient information leaflet produced by NHSBT.

2. Lose less blood throughout your treatment

This is done by using modern techniques and medicines to prevent you losing blood in the first place. This includes using advanced surgical tools and medicines to reduce bleeding in the operating theatre.

3. Maximising your body's own abilities to cope during recovery after treatment

Your body has the natural ability to adapt to a lower haemoglobin level (the molecule responsible for carrying oxygen inside red cells) without resorting to a blood transfusion. You may need iron tablets or intravenous iron to help increase your haemoglobin.



Is Patient Blood Management available in all hospitals?

PBM is being implemented across England. Local, national and international experts are helping doctors, nurses, scientists and other healthcare professionals to work together with you to deliver PBM.

During your treatment, a transfusion of red cells or other blood component such as platelets may be required. If so, there are other patient information leaflets available from NHSBT such as 'Will I need a blood transfusion?' that may help explain things for you.

Where can I get more information?

A healthcare professional should explain transfusion risks, benefits and any alternatives available to you.

Before your surgical or medical treatment, you may wish to ask questions such as:

For your GP, Consultant or Nurse:

- Am I anaemic or is my iron level low?
- If so, how can it be improved before my treatment?
- Are there any medications, herbal or vitamin supplements I should stop or start taking before my treatment?
- Is there anything I can change in my diet so I can be healthier to support my recovery?

For your Hospital specialist:

- Is there a possibility that I will need a blood transfusion with my planned treatment?
- What are the risks of transfusion that I should be aware of?
- What options are available to me to avoid a transfusion?
- If it gets to a point where you think a transfusion becomes unavoidable (a healthcare professional should explain why a transfusion is necessary), can you limit the amount of blood you give me?

Additional information

As a precautionary measure to reduce the risk of transmitting variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (vCJD), people who have received a transfusion of blood or any blood component since 1980 are currently unable to donate blood or blood components.

Further information on Iron in your diet, Anaemia and the need for a blood transfusion is available in other patient information leaflets. Please ask your healthcare professional if you would like a copy of these.

You may also find the following websites useful:

Patient Information Leaflets

<http://hospital.blood.co.uk/patient-services/patient-blood-management/patient-information-leaflets/>

NHS Blood and Transplant

<http://www.nhsbt.nhs.uk/what-we-do/blood-transfusion/>

Consent for blood transfusion

<http://hospital.blood.co.uk/patient-services/patient-blood-management/consent-for-transfusion/>

Department of Health Government paper "No Decision About Me Without Me". Dec 2012

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/216980/Liberating-the-NHS-No-decision-about-me-without-me-Government-response.pdf

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.nhsbleaflets.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 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**