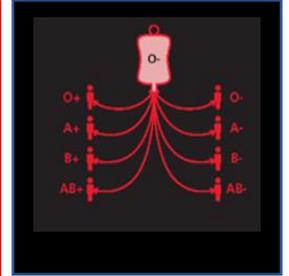




O Negative blood

This blood group plays a vital role in emergencies. Around **8%** of the population are O Negative (OD Neg) but it makes up about **13%** of blood needed by hospitals. O Negative blood can be used to help patients of all blood types and is called the “universal blood type”. Collecting enough O Negative is a constant challenge.



Why is O Negative a concern?

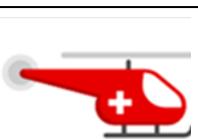
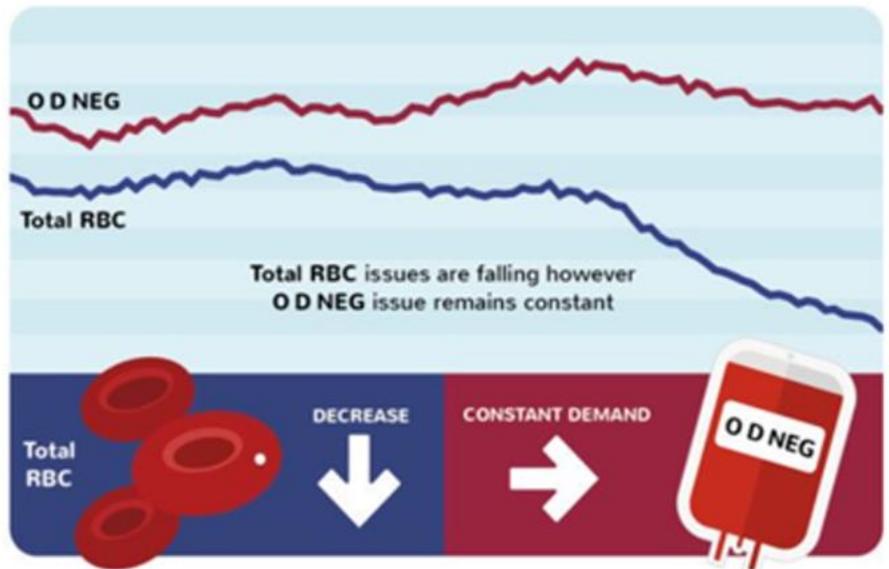
Overall red blood cell demand has **↓** against an **↑** in O Negative blood. Sustainability remains a challenge.

Current demand

Total red blood cell usage is falling due to improved surgical techniques and the implementation of Patient Blood Management (PBM) initiatives, including the use of alternatives. However, demand for O Negative is increasing. Stability of the supply chain for universal components such as O Negative red blood cells remains a challenge for most blood services around the world and we are working hard to ensure adequate supplies are available when required.

Efforts by NHS Blood & Transplant are primarily focused on improvement of donor marketing to achieve a blood group mix appropriate to clinical demands.

We encourage you to make a difference and consider a range of initiatives to help conserve this precious resource.



Some factors that increase O Negative demand:

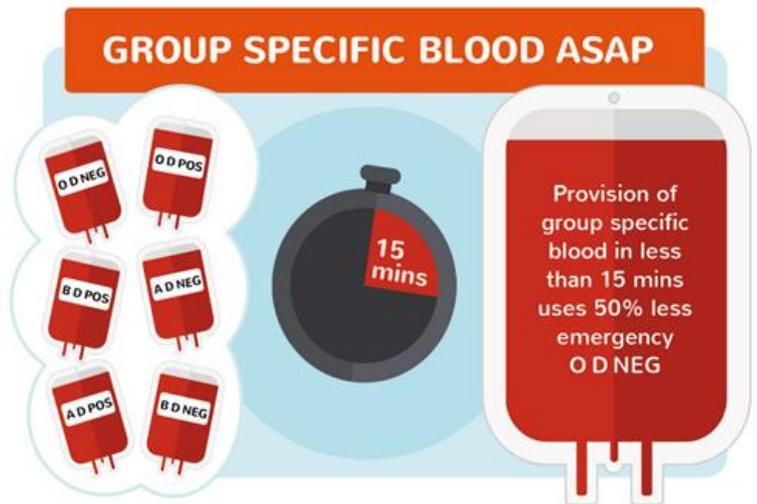
- Air ambulances and emergency response vehicles carrying O Negative.
- Increasing use of O Negative as a substitution for patients with the rare blood group subtype Ro. This is due to a shortfall of Ro donors.
- Increasing number of remote satellite fridges holding emergency units.
- Using O Negative where group specific blood would suffice.
- O Negative is wasted in hospitals more than any other group, accounting for just under 1 in 3 units overall. Causes include ‘cold chain breaches’ where blood is out of controlled storage too long.



What can YOU do to help us reduce the demand for O Negative blood?

Appropriate Use - Does your patient REALLY need emergency O Negative units?

Did you know it may be possible for your transfusion lab to provide group specific blood in 15 mins following confirmation of ABO group by 2 separate samples?



#ODNeg

Robust policies & compliance for taking pre-transfusion samples;

- Timely taking of 2 samples
- Adherence to correct labelling policy

⇒ Both avoid delays and the need to substitute with group O if transfusion becomes urgent before the group is known

Give as much notice as possible when requesting blood for any known patients with antibodies or haemoglobinopathies

⇒ This enables the lab to request appropriate specification components and helps reduce substitutions

#EveryBagCounts



Minimising wastage

- Only open blood transport boxes when the blood inside is about to be used
- Return any unused units to Blood Bank ASAP
- Inform blood bank if blood you have ordered is no longer required



Working together we can help maintain an available supply of a precious resource for those who clinically need it.

<https://hospital.blood.co.uk/patient-services/patient-blood-management/o-d-negative-red-cell-toolkit/>

