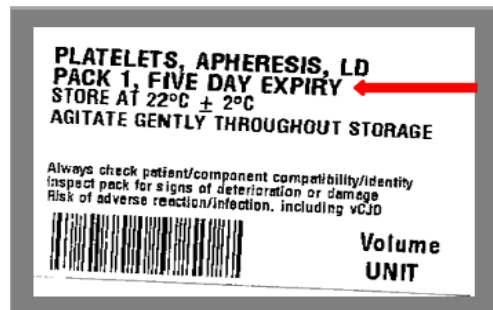


5-Day Contingency Platelets: Key Messages

For Hospital Clinical Teams



- Platelets are normally screened for the presence of bacteria by NHS Blood and Transplant [NHSBT] before they are sent to hospitals, this testing is a risk reduction measure and allows the shelf-life of platelets to be extended to 7 days.
- If needed for emergency business continuity e.g. bacterial screening services are not available, NHSBT will issue all platelets with a shelf-life of 5 days, which will have not been screened for bacteria.
- This measure might also be needed during a severe platelet shortage, if other measures to address the shortage were not sufficient to meet demand, in line with national emergency platelet shortage plans.
- The platelet pack label will say **5-day Expiry**, but the unit will otherwise appear the same as usual.



Bacterial screening is highly effective, but in the absence of bacterial screening for platelets the risk of a transfusion-transmitted infection remains low, due to the range of NHSBT quality assurance measures in place for platelet donation.

- It will be important to be vigilant when undertaking the visual check of platelets prior to transfusion, please report any pack abnormalities/ defects or suspected adverse reactions to your hospital transfusion laboratory.