



# Unexpected Blood Transfusion

**Important information for all patients who have received an unexpected blood transfusion.**

**Note:** This leaflet should be read alongside the NHS Blood and Transplant patient information leaflet 'Receiving a Blood Transfusion'.



## **While you were receiving treatment, it was necessary for you to receive a blood transfusion.**

A transfusion is given when it is necessary and only after careful consideration of the risks of transfusion balanced against the risk of not having one. There are many reasons why patients may need a transfusion, some of which are discussed in the 'Receiving a Blood Transfusion' leaflet. However, 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?**

Blood transfusions are common procedures that can save and improve lives, and death due to transfusion is extremely rare. Most patients who receive a blood transfusion experience no complications or problems.

More information about any potential infection risks, and all the measures that are taken to ensure your safety, is included in the leaflet 'Receiving a Blood Transfusion'.

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

No. 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 GP?**

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](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Blood-transfusion/Pages/Introduction.aspx)

NHS Blood and Transplant – Blood Website

[www.nhsbt.nhs.uk/what-we-do/blood-transfusion/](http://www.nhsbt.nhs.uk/what-we-do/blood-transfusion/)

UK Transfusion Services

[www.transfusionguidelines.org.uk/index.aspx](http://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:**

Patient Blood Management  
NHS Blood and Transplant  
500 North Bristol Park  
Northway  
Filton  
Bristol  
BS34 7QH

**By email to:** [PBM.team@nhsbt.nhs.uk](mailto:PBM.team@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.blood.co.uk/patient-services/patient-blood-management/patient-information-leaflets/>.

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

The public can obtain the evidence sources for this leaflet by calling **01865 381010**.

**NHS Blood and Transplant** (NHSBT) saves and improves lives by providing a safe, reliable and efficient supply of blood and associated services to the NHS in England. We are the organ donor organisation for the UK and are responsible for matching and allocating donated organs. We rely on thousands of members of the public who voluntarily donate their blood, organs, tissues and stem cells.

**For more information**

Visit [nhsbt.nhs.uk](https://nhsbt.nhs.uk)

Email [enquiries@nhsbt.nhs.uk](mailto:enquiries@nhsbt.nhs.uk)

Call **0300 123 23 23**

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