



Blood Transfusion

Blood Transfusion



Blood Donation



Blood Screening



Overview

If you lose blood because of an injury or surgical procedure, or if your body has trouble making blood, you may need a blood transfusion. This is a common procedure that adds blood from a donor to your own blood.

How a Transfusion is Performed

During a transfusion, you sit or lie down. An intravenous (IV) line is placed in one of your blood vessels. This line is connected to a bag containing the donor blood. For the next hour or two, a healthcare worker monitors you closely as the blood transfers into your body. After the procedure, a slight bruise may form around the site of the IV.

Where it Comes From

The blood given to you during a transfusion can come from several sources. It may come from someone you don't know who donated it for community use. It may come from a person you know who has donated blood specifically for your use. You can also donate blood to yourself. You can have some of your blood removed and stored for a short time before a medical procedure so it can be given back to you when you need it. You may also be able to have some blood removed just before a surgery, temporarily replaced with other fluids and then returned to you after the procedure. And in some cases, blood that would normally be lost during a procedure can be collected, processed and returned to your body.

Patient Safety

There are some risks associated with blood transfusions. Many people worry about becoming infected with HIV, hepatitis or other illnesses if they are given someone else's blood. But donor blood is screened carefully for diseases, so this risk is very small. Blood transfusions can also cause allergic reactions or similar issues, but the risk of these problems is small as well. Your doctor will let you know if you have specific risk factors that you need to consider before a transfusion.