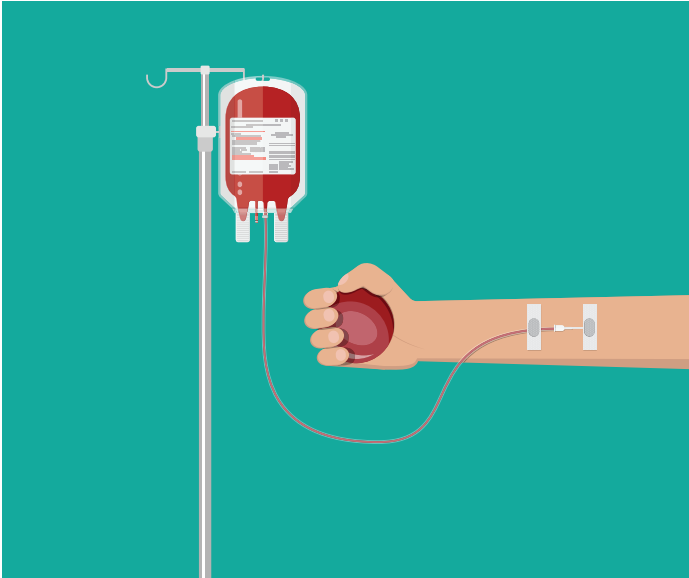


## Information for Health Care Provider



### The Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Blood Coordinating Program

The Provincial Blood Coordinating Program was established by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to ensure that blood components and blood products are used in a safe, efficient manner for health care recipients throughout the province.

#### Why is informed consent so important?

The Canadian Standards Association requires informed consent prior to a transfusion.

To ensure an informed decision is made, the recipient must be provided with, and must clearly understand, the following information:

- Blood components or blood products to be transfused;
- Risks and benefits associated with transfusion;
- Risks associated with choosing not to be transfused; and
- Alternatives to blood transfusion, if clinically appropriate.

The recipient must be provided with an opportunity to ask questions. The recipient has a right to refuse or consent to transfusion. You must document in the recipient's health record that the discussion on transfusion occurred and whether consent was obtained.

Following a transfusion, recipients will receive notification in writing from the appropriate regional health authority.

#### What additional information does the recipient need?

Receiving a transfusion can be very intimidating. In addition to the information included in the informed consent discussion, recipients should be informed about:

- Indication or purpose for the transfusion;
- How the component/product will be transfused/administered;
- Duration of treatment; and
- Side effects and symptoms which may indicate an adverse transfusion reaction. Advise recipients to report these signs and symptoms to a health care provider. Include additional instructions on reporting process to those receiving transfusion on an outpatient basis.

#### What are the risks of transfusion?

The risk of contracting infectious diseases through a transfusion is very low. Blood components are stringently tested.

The possibility of an adverse reaction varies with each person and with each component/product.

Event	Patient Risk (per red cell unit)
HIV (AIDS)	1 in 21.4 million
Hepatitis C	1 in 12.6 million
Human T Cell Lymphotropic Virus	1 in 619 million
Bacterial contamination	1 in 50,000
Hepatitis B	1 in 7.5 million
Anaphylactic reaction	Rare
Acute hemolytic reaction	1 in 40,000
Transfusion related acute lung injury	1 in 5,000
Circulatory overload	1 in 700
Febrile non-hemolytic reaction	1 per 500 unit red blood cells / 1 per 20 pooled platelets
Minor allergic reaction	1 in 100

**Advise the recipient to contact a health care provider if they experience any of the following:**

- Rash
- Back or Chest Pain
- Chills
- Diarrhea
- Shortness of Breath
- Itching
- Stomach Pain
- Fever
- Tremors
- Faintness
- Hives
- Light Headedness
- Vomiting
- Nausea
- Headache

**What are the alternatives to blood transfusion?**

Recipients should be advised of all appropriate alternatives based on their condition.

These alternatives may include:

- **Erythropoietin** promotes formation of red blood cells. It may be administered prior to surgery to increase hemoglobin.
- **Volume Expanders** such as crystalloids (Ringers Lactate, Normal Saline) or colloids (starches) may be considered.
- **Pharmacologic Agents for Bleeding**, including antifibrinolytics (Aprotinin, Tranexamic Acid), Vitamin K, Prothrombin Complex Concentrates in emergency situations for reversal of Warfarin, and DDAVP for management of suitable cases of Hemophilia A or Von Willebrand’s Disease.
- **Therapeutic Management of Anemia** using iron, folic acid, vitamin B12, and/or Erythropoietin.
- **Acute Normovolemic Hemodilution** in which blood withdrawn under anesthesia is replaced with crystalloid/colloid during surgery and is then re-transfused after bleeding ceases or if hemoglobin is unacceptably low.
- **Cell Salvage** may be available in some sites in elective or emergency settings.

For more information on the Provincial Blood Coordinating Program, visit [www.gov.nl.ca/health/bloodservices](http://www.gov.nl.ca/health/bloodservices) or email [healthinfo@gov.nl.ca](mailto:healthinfo@gov.nl.ca).