

Department of haematology

Transfusion

Pre and post transfusion advice for patients receiving a blood component transfusion

You have been advised that you need a red cell or platelet transfusion.

- The practitioner in clinic today will give you the date and time of your transfusion and the clinical area where it will take place.
- Before you leave the hospital today you must have a simple blood test taken so that we can prepare your blood transfusion.
- Your appointment/transfusion episode may take up to 5 hours or longer.
- Unless directed by your doctor, you should still take your medication(s) as normal on the day of transfusion. You should also bring with you your required medication(s) for the day.
- **On the day** of your transfusion, please book in at the clinical area as directed.
- When you arrive on the clinical area, if you do not have a central venous access device, the nurse will place an intravenous cannula into your hand or arm and may take a further blood sample before your transfusion.
- Generally the clinical areas are for patients only, and relatives and friends may not be able to sit with you while you have your transfusion. If you are attending the Endocrine unit for a transfusion, you will be allowed to have one relative or friend remain with you. However, please check with your practitioner beforehand.
- Refreshments will be provided. If you have any special dietary needs, please ensure that staff are informed, and you can also bring these refreshments in with you.
- You can bring items with you to read, listen or watch during the transfusion.
- Most transfusions take place without problems, but having a transfusion carries a very small risk of developing side effects. These may develop whilst the transfusion is in progress, within several hours, or in some cases, may happen days or weeks later. These side effects are often mild, but it is still important to report any unusual or unexpected symptoms to a doctor or nurse.

Please contact the hospital for advice if you experience any of the following symptoms:

- a rise in your temperature - feeling feverish, hot and clammy
- shivering or 'cold chills'
- breathing problems
- extreme tiredness
- passing blood in your urine
- passing much less, or much darker urine than is normal for you

Please see overleaf for further information



- itchy skin rash
- pain in the lower back (loin pain)
- unexpected or unexplained bruising
- jaundice (yellow colour in the white of your eyes or skin)
- Transfusion Associated Circulatory Overload (TACO) is a very rare but serious complication of a transfusion which may occur within 6 hours of the transfusion. Symptoms include acute breathing difficulties, chest tightness, cough, increase in heart rate and increase in blood pressure.

OR anything which is different from normal.

If you have any concerns or queries, please contact **The Christie Hotline on 0161 446 3658** (24 hours). Please tell the staff that you have recently had a transfusion.

In the rare event of an emergency (life-threatening problems, for example, difficulty breathing, cardiac pain) call 999 for an ambulance. This will take you to your local hospital. Please remember to take this leaflet with you.

If you need information in a different format, such as easy read, large print, BSL, braille, email, SMS text or other communication support, please tell your ward or clinic nurse.

We try to ensure that all our information given to patients is accurate, balanced and based on the most up-to-date scientific evidence. If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact patient.information@christie.nhs.uk

For information and advice visit the cancer information centres at Withington, Oldham or Salford. Opening times can vary, please check before making a special journey.

Contact The Christie Hotline for
urgent support and specialist advice
The Christie Hotline: 0161 446 3658
Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

