

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.
- **Before you leave the hospital today** you must have a simple blood test taken so that we can prepare your blood component for when you require the transfusion.
- Your appointment/transfusion episode may take up to 5 hours or longer.
- Please discuss with the practitioner what time you should arrive in the clinical area.
- 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 in the clinical area, if you do not have a central line, 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. However, please check with your practitioner beforehand.
- Refreshments will be provided. If you have any special dietary needs, please inform the staff. You can also bring refreshments with you on the day of transfusion.
- You can bring something to read or listen to whilst you are waiting.
- 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 usual for you.
- Itchy skin rash.
- Pain in lower back, loin or abdomen.
- Unexpected or unexplained bruising.

Please see overleaf for further information



- Jaundice (yellowing in colour of the whites 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.
- Any other symptom that you may be concerned about.

If you have any concerns or queries, please contact **The Christie Hotline** on **0161 446 3658** (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) and advise 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 try to remember to take this leaflet with you.

Please note that as you have received a transfusion you are not eligible to donate blood in the future. Please contact the NHS Blood and Transplant donation service directly if you have any queries regarding this:

Phone: 0300 123 2323

Email: customer.services@nhsbt.nhs.uk

Website: www.blood.co.uk

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.

The Christie is committed to producing high quality, evidence based information for patients. Our patient information adheres to the principles and quality statements of the Information Standard. If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact **the-christie.patient.information@nhs.net**

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



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